



MAOYU

Archenemy and Hero

“Become mine, Hero”

“I refuse!”

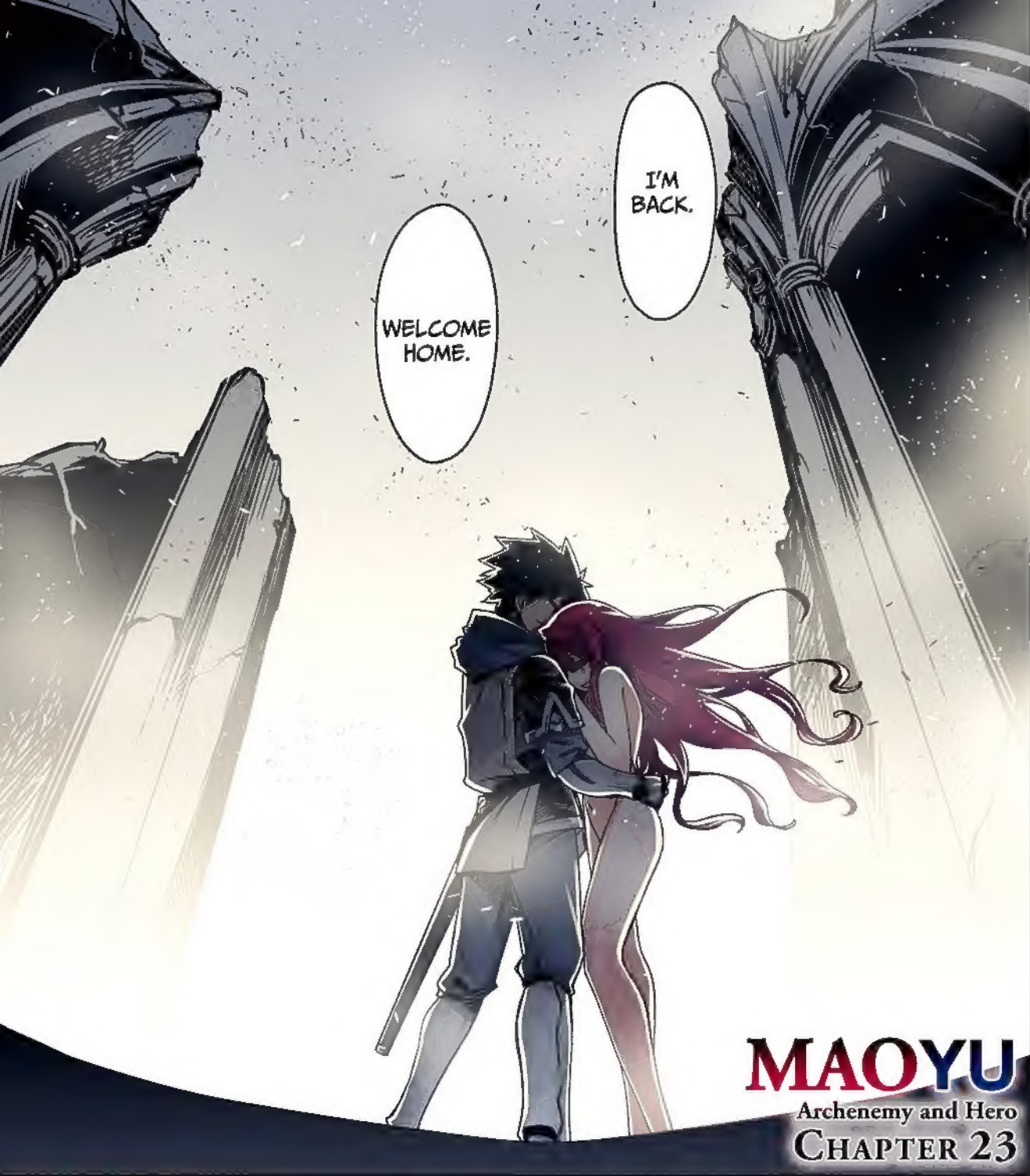
VOLUME

7

Art by
AKIRA ISHIDA

Original Work by
MAMARE TOUNO

Character Design by **KEINOJOU MIZUTAMA** and **toi8**



CHAPTER 23 Archenemy and Hero

There is a Time to Fight and a Time to Relent



MAOYU
Archenemy and Hero
“Become mine, Hero” “I refuse!”

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CHAPTER 23 Archenemy and Hero 001

There is a Time to Fight and a Time to Relent

CHAPTER 24 Archenemy and Hero 049

I Love This World

CHAPTER 25 Archenemy and Hero 101

Time Demands It



MAOYU

Archenemy and Hero

“Become mine, Hero” “I refuse!”

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COLUMN PAGE

Daisuke Takenouchi (Recca-sha)

Masataka Nomura



cavalry of the Midnight Sun Kingdom begin invading the Iron Kingdom. Additionally, a company of Blue Demons appears south of the Winter Kingdom, putting the Lonely Winter King and his allies in a difficult position.

The Soldier's Son, once a student of the Demon Queen, leads the Iron Kingdom's border patrol in driving back the Midnight Sun forces.



Under the command of the Female Knight, the Southern Kingdoms' allied forces delay the start of the war until snow



begins to fall in order to avoid a serious military confrontation. While trying to handle the Blue Demons himself, the Hero is reunited with the missing Female Magician, and using her displacement magic, they successfully return all the demons to the Spirit World. In this manner, the Southern Kingdoms avoid a head-on clash with the Central Continent and escapes danger.

The Hero heeds the Female Magicians instructions and heads for the Demon Queen's Castle. When he arrives at the Palace of the Underworld within its depths, he finds himself face-to-face with a Demon Queen tainted by the souls of past demon monarchs. The Hero fights with all his strength as he desperately calls out to the heart of the Demon Queen. His voice casts a light on the Demon Queen's consciousness, and she restores her control over her body.



In order to truly end the war between humans and demons, the Demon Queen and Hero begin working together. More than two years have passed since they began working out of Overwinter Village in the Spirit World.

During this time, under the name the Crimson Scholar, the Demon Queen introduced numerous ideas and technologies to the Winter Kingdom and the other Southern Kingdoms. The lives of their people improved, and the kingdoms grew stronger.



However, displeased with this turn of events, the Holy Kingdom and Central Church tried to maintain their hold over the Southern Kingdoms by carrying out the Second Landing Operation to Recover Aurora Island and accusing the Crimson Scholar of heresy. While the Demon Queen is away in the Spirit World at the Palace of the Underworld, the Lonely Winter King of the Winter Kingdom, who fostered a positive relationship with the Demon Queen, is unsure of what to do, but he decides to use this opportunity to establish his independence from the Central Continent.

Forming a Trade Alliance with the



sympathetic Ice and Iron Kingdoms, they had begun taking steps toward becoming independent.

Learning of their actions, the Central Church declares the three kingdoms apostate nations. The Holy Kingdom declares war on the Southern kingdoms in an attempt to control them by force and dispatches a massive army.

As the Southern Kingdoms attempt to handle this threat, the light



SUMMARY OF MAOYU VOLUME 6

Lectures on Archenemy and Hero
Outline of volume.6

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THE HERO

A young man who resolved to work alongside the Demon Queen. In order to make her dreams reality, he travels between the Southern Kingdoms and Spirit World. He rescues the Demon Queen when she is tainted by the souls of past demon monarchs.



THE FEMALE KNIGHT

One of the Hero's former traveling companions. She is a sympathetic supporter of the Demon Queen and Hero. She and the Demon Queen are also romantic rivals.



THE LONELY WINTER KING

The young king of the Winter Kingdom. He establishes a trade alliance with the Iron and Ice Kingdoms and breaks away from the Central Continent. As the leader of the trade alliance, he deals with the approaching threats.



THE FEMALE MAGICIAN

Like the Female Knight, she is one of the Hero's former traveling companions. Her magical abilities exceed even the Hero's. She has some kind of relationship with the Demon Queen.



THE IRON FIST KING

King of the Iron Kingdom, the preeminent industrial nation. The king himself is an experienced warrior. He formed the Three Kingdom Alliance with the Lonely Winter King and Blizzard Queen.



THE COMMANDER OF THE EASTERN FORTRESS

Officer of the Holy Key Expeditionary Force formerly occupying Gateway City. After the expeditionary force leaves, he begins representing the humans and working with the demons to manage the city.



THE MERCHANT'S SON

One of the young men who studied under the Demon Queen. He works as the treasurer of the Winter Kingdom. His methods for dealing with the Alliance's movements impressed even the Young Merchant.



THE BLIZZARD QUEEN

Queen of the Ice Kingdom, home of the traveling minstrel. She formed the Three Kingdom Alliance with the Lonely Winter King and Iron Fist King. She uses the Noble's Son to gather information in the Central Continent.



THE DEMON QUEEN

The queen of demons working to truly end the war between demons and humans. Though she became tainted by the souls of past demon monarchs in the Palace of the Underworld, she was able to return with the help of the Hero and Chief Maid.



THE CHIEF MAID

Has been caring for the Demon Queen since she was a child. She was gravely injured while fighting against the Demon Queen when she became corrupted by the souls of past demon monarchs, but she never stopped believing in her.



THE YOUNG MERCHANT

Leader of the Alliance, the human world's largest economic organization. The existence of Gateway City and a visit from Princess Fire Dragon prompts him to begin trying to trade with demons.

THE OLDER MAID SISTER

Standing in for the Demon Queen while she is gone, she is forced to face the Demon Queen's impeachment. Drawing from her own experiences, her words changed the consciousnesses of the people.



PRINCESS FIRE DRAGON

Daughter of Archduke Fire Dragon, ruler of the Fire Dragons. As a representative of Gateway City, she visits the Young Merchant in search of salt. She continues staying in the Human World even after establishing a deal.



THE MIDDLE AGED MERCHANT

A merchant of the Alliance. He has previously worked with the Young Merchant. In order to deliver the salt requested by Princess Fire Dragon, he visits Gateway City.



THE SHREWD TREASURER

A member of the Alliance. As his right hand man, he precisely executes his orders with a cool head.

THE YOUNGER MAID SISTER

A former serf working with her sister in the Demon Queen's mansion. As her gluttony grows, she begins pursuing the way of cooking and expanding her repertoire.



MAOYU CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

Lectures on Archenemy and Hero
Character Profile



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THINGS
ARE
PRETTY
CRAZY
ABOVE
GROUND.

IT'S
IN
TUR-
MOIL.



HOW ARE
THINGS
OVER
THERE?

IS
EVERY-
ONE ALL
RIGHT?



I SEE.

YOU
FOUND
OUT...



YEAH.

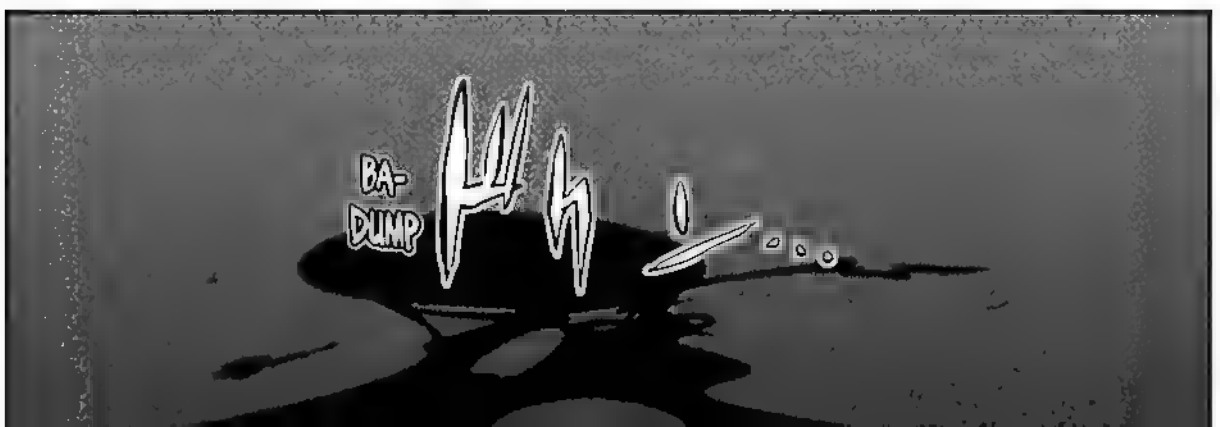
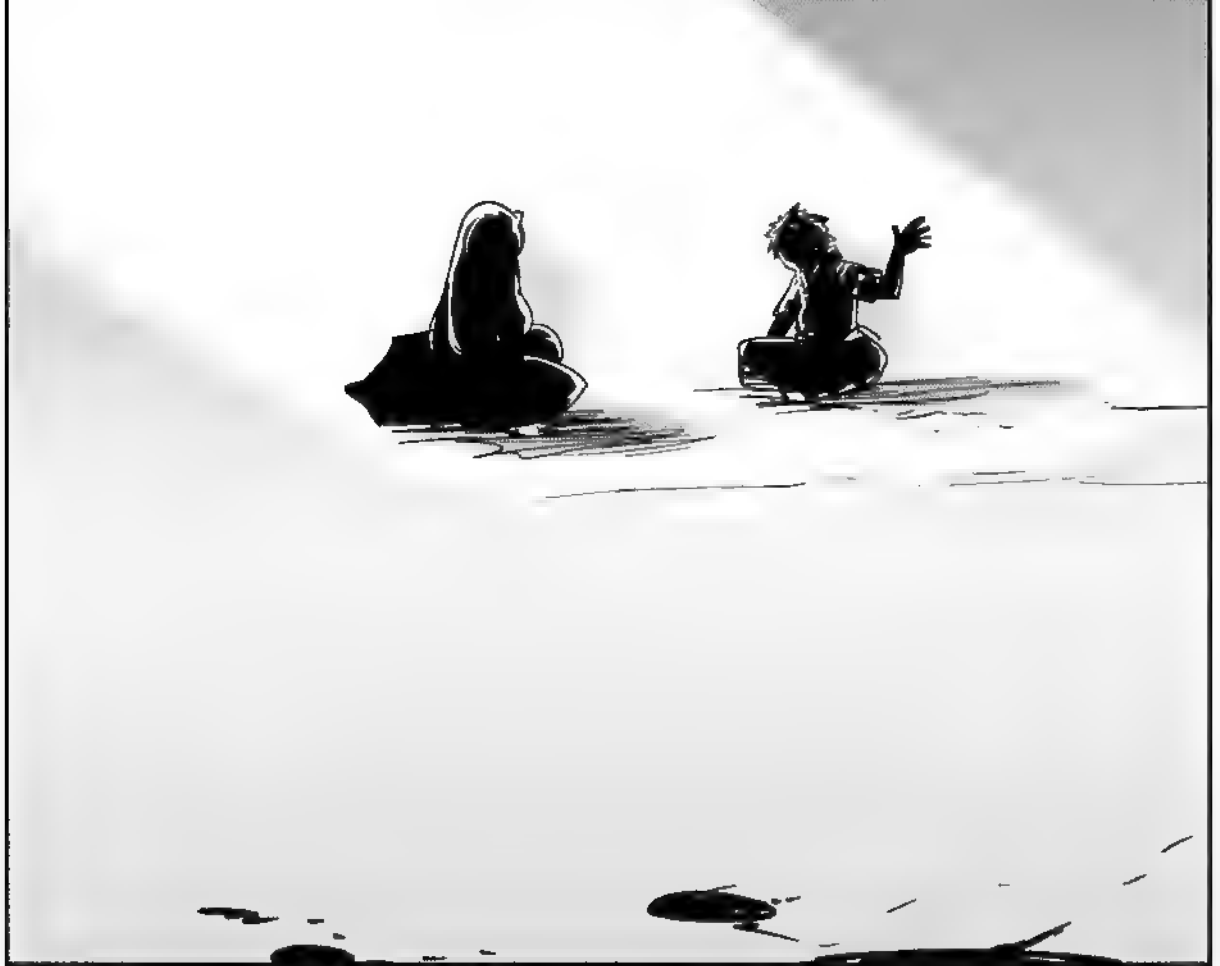
THE
FEMALE
MAGICIAN
TOLD ME.



...THAT
THE HUMAN
AND SPIRIT
WORLD
ARE TWO
SIDES OF
THE SAME
LAND.

WHERE
SHOULD I
BEGIN?

TELL ME
EVERY-
THING.



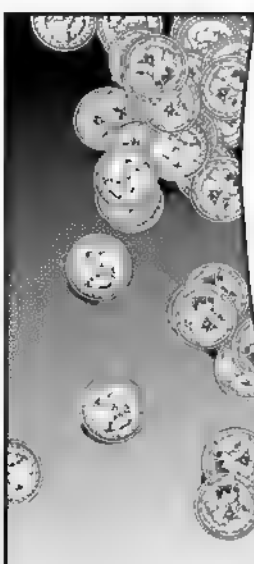




THE HOLY CHURCH THAT SERVES THE SPIRITS OF LIGHT...

...HAD TOO MUCH FAITH IN ITS OWN POWER.

THEIR EFFORTS TO RE-MINT THEIR CURRENCY IS A DROP IN THE BUCKET.



THE FLOW OF CURRENCY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CENTRAL CONTINENT IS ALREADY BEGINNING TO COLLAPSE ON ITSELF.

IF THAT'S THE CASE, THERE ARE SPEARS WE MUST TAKE UP.

WASN'T THIS A WAR?



BUT THAT ENDS NOW.



THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERY ACTION.

...THERE IS A SEASON FOR EVERY-THING.

IN THIS WORLD ...



THERE
IS A
TIME TO
LOVE...

...AND A
TIME TO
HATE.

THERE
IS A
TIME TO
FIGHT...

...AND A
TIME TO
RELENT.

THERE
IS A
TIME TO
CRY...

...AND A
TIME TO
LAUGH.

THERE
IS A
TIME
FOR
GRIEV-
ING...

...AND
A TIME
FOR
DANC-
ING.

THERE
IS A
TIME
TO BE
SILENT

...AND
A TIME
TO
SPEAK.

THERE
IS A
TIME TO
LIVE...

...AND
A TIME
TO DIE.

THERE
IS A
TIME TO
PLANT...

...AND
A TIME
TO HAR-
VEST.

THERE
IS A
TIME
TO
KILL...

...AND
A TIME
TO
HEAL.



ISN'T THAT
WHY YOU
CAME TO THIS
KINGDOM?

TO MAKE
A FINAL
DECISION.

THAT'S
WHAT YOU
BELIEVE.



A
MERCHANT
MUST
NEVER
SHOW
PITY.

AT TIMES
YOU EVEN
SEEM TO
RUE YOUR
HEART-
LESS-
NESS.

YOU SEEM
LIKE A
GENUINE
MAN OF
TRADE...

...BUT AT
TIMES
YOU
SEEM
FRAGILE.



I
WILL
NOT
HELP
YOU...

...THE
WAY I
WOULD
HELP
MY
DAR-
LING.

IF YOU
ALLOW
YOUR-
SELF TO
BE RULED
BY YOUR
EMOTIONS,
I SUPPOSE
THAT MAY
BE SO...

...BUT IT IS
NOT LIKE YOU
TO FEAR PITY
WHEN YOU ARE
CAPABLE OF
USING IT AS A
WEAPON.



VERY WELL.

WE'LL GO TO THE RESCUE OF THE CHURCH OF HOLY LIGHTS.



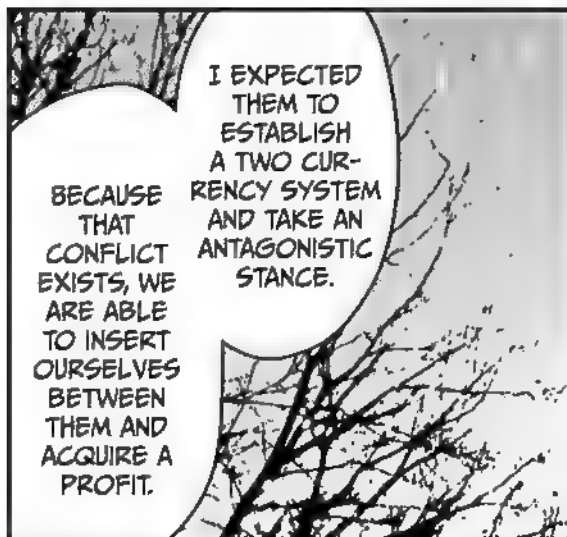
OF COURSE NOT.

THIS IS A BATTLE-FIELD. WE MUST FIGHT WITH CAUTION.

THOUGH I WANT SALT, THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS



IT'S NOT THAT EASY, IS IT?



BECAUSE THAT CONFLICT EXISTS, WE ARE ABLE TO INSERT OURSELVES BETWEEN THEM AND ACQUIRE A PROFIT.

I EXPECTED THEM TO ESTABLISH A TWO CURRENCY SYSTEM AND TAKE AN ANTAGONISTIC STANCE.



IN A MERCHANT'S WAY.

YOU'RE GOING TO HELP THEM?



LET US SETTLE THINGS WITH THE HEROES OF THE SOUTH.

THE WINTER KINGDOM
THE ROYAL PALACE



YOU ARE THE OPPOSITE OF MY DARLING.



INSTEAD OF SQUEEZING IT OUT OF THEM ALL AT ONCE, I WILL CONDUCT SUSTAINABLE TRADE.

THAT IS MY DECISION.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU, YOUNG MERCHANT.



...AND IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU...

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, LONELY WINTER KING...

...IRON FIST KING AND BLIZZARD QUEEN.



THAT'S A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT!

ALL OF THEM?



HOW DO YOU INTEND TO USE THEM?



THE ALLIANCE WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE ALL THE POTATOES THE THREE KINGDOM ALLIANCE...

...HAS IN ITS NATIONAL STORES AS WELL AS ALL POTATOES...

...THAT WILL BE PRODUCED UNTIL SPRING.



LET US BEGIN WITH THE FIRST SUBJECT.



I CAN MAKE UP FOR SOME DEGREE OF SHORTAGE BY DISTRIBUTING WHEAT.

CAUSING HUNGER ISN'T THE ALLIANCE'S GOAL.

CURRENTLY THE CENTRAL KINGDOMS IS EXPERIENCING A SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF CROPS.

THEY WOULD RATHER EAT POTATOES THAN STARVE TO DEATH.

THE CHURCH OF HOLY LIGHTS HAS DECLARED POTATOES A HERESY!

I WILL SELL THEM TO THE KINGDOMS OF THE CENTRAL CONTINENT.

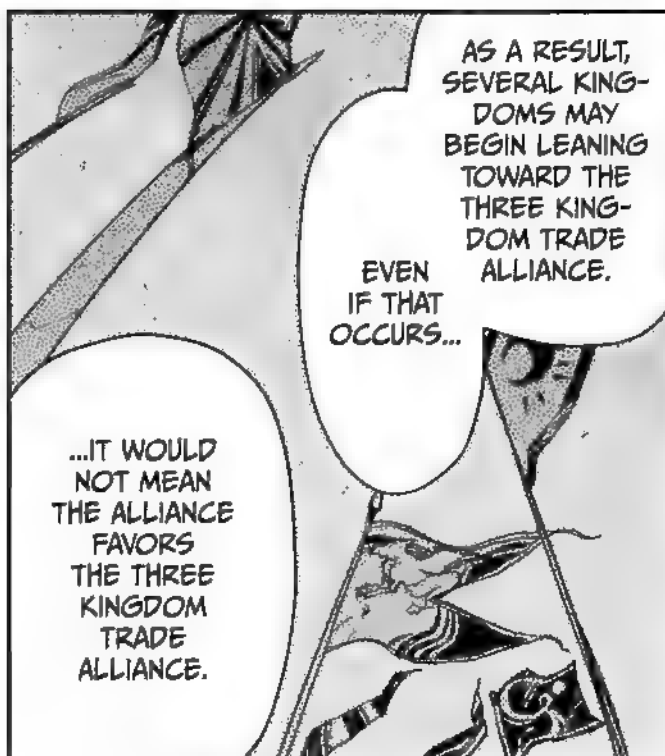
THERE'S NO WAY THEY'LL BUY THEM!



NO.



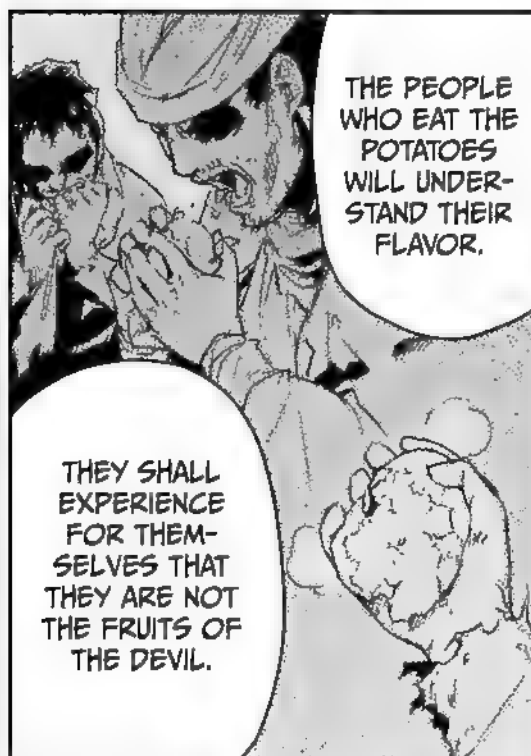
YOU'LL SUPPORT THE THREE KINGDOM TRADE ALLIANCE?



AS A RESULT, SEVERAL KINGDOMS MAY BEGIN LEANING TOWARD THE THREE KINGDOM TRADE ALLIANCE.

EVEN IF THAT OCCURS...

...IT WOULD NOT MEAN THE ALLIANCE FAVORS THE THREE KINGDOM TRADE ALLIANCE.



THE PEOPLE WHO EAT THE POTATOES WILL UNDERSTAND THEIR FLAVOR.

THEY SHALL EXPERIENCE FOR THEMSELVES THAT THEY ARE NOT THE FRUITS OF THE DEVIL.

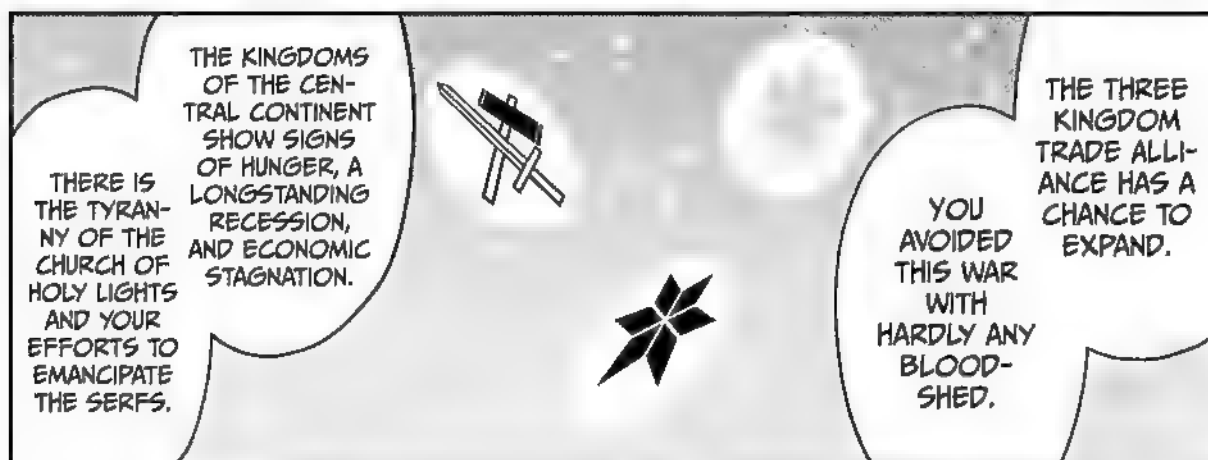


WHETHER YOU
REALIZE IT OR
NOT, YOU ARE
STANDING AT A
CROSSROADS.



WELL
...

WHAT IS THE
ALLIANCE'S
GOAL IN
THIS SITU-
ATION?



THERE IS
THE TYRAN-
NY OF THE
CHURCH OF
HOLY LIGHTS
AND YOUR
EFFORTS TO
EMANCIPATE
THE SERFS.

THE KINGDOMS
OF THE CEN-
TRAL CONTINENT
SHOW SIGNS
OF HUNGER, A
LONGSTANDING
RECESSION,
AND ECONOMIC
STAGNATION.

YOU
AVOIDED
THIS WAR
WITH
HARDLY ANY
BLOOD-
SHED.

THE THREE
KINGDOM
TRADE ALLI-
ANCE HAS A
CHANCE TO
EXPAND.



I CAN'T
ANSWER
THAT.

AHEM

...OR FORM
A SECRET
MILITARY
ALLIANCE?

HAVEN'T
SEVERAL
KINGDOMS
ALREADY
TRIED TO
SOUND YOU
OUT...

...ASKING
YOU TO
EASE YOUR
CUSTOM
DUTIES
ON THEIR
KINGDOM...



WE'VE
NEVER SEEN
ANYTHING
LIKE THIS.

YOU ARE
A MILI-
TARY AND
RELIGIOUS
POWER
THAT ISN'T
THE HOLY
KINGDOM
OR THE
CHURCH
OF HOLY
LIGHTS.

THE THREE
KINGDOM
TRADE ALLI-
ANCE WAS
BORN UNDER
THOSE
CONDITIONS.



UNTIL NOW, THE
HOLY KINGDOM
AND CHURCH OF
HOLY LIGHT HAVE
BEEN ALLOWED
TO BE THE SOLE
RULERS OF THIS
CONTINENT.

THEY'VE
BEEN ABLE TO
PURGE REBEL
FORCES WITH
THEIR OWN
MILITARY
FORCE.



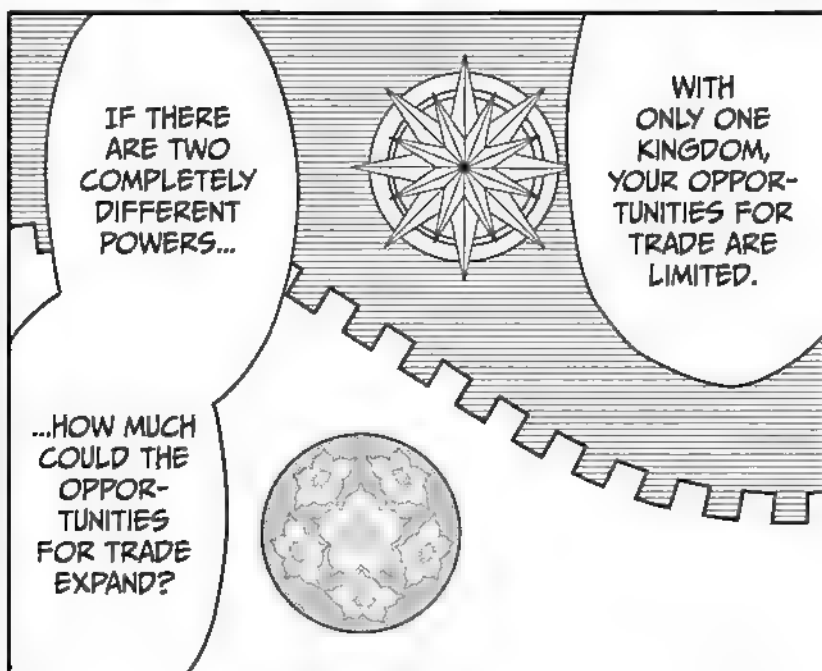
AMONG
MERCHANTS,
WE CALL
THIS A
MARKET.

THIS
OPPORTU-
NITY WILL
EXPAND YOUR
SPHERE OF
INFLUENCE
AND YOUR
ECONOMY.

THOUGH
ITS SCALE
IS SMALL,
THERE IS A
BRAND NEW
CHANCE
WAITING
THERE
FOR YOU.



IS THAT
THE REAL
ISSUE AT
HAND?



IF THERE
ARE TWO
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
POWERS...

...HOW MUCH
COULD THE
OPPOR-
TUNITIES
FOR TRADE
EXPAND?

WITH
ONLY ONE
KINGDOM,
YOUR OPPOR-
TUNITIES FOR
TRADE ARE
LIMITED.



THAT'S
AN EVEN
TRADE.

...OR 1.55
TIMES
AS MUCH
BARLEY?

WOULD
YOU TRADE
THEM FOR
0.7 TIMES
AS MUCH
MILLED
WHEAT...

FIRST,
REGARD-
ING THE
POTATOES.

I
UNDER-
STAND
SO FAR.

HOW
MUCH
WILL IT
COST
US?



...IF YOU
DISRE-
GARD ANY
PROFIT
YOU MAY
MAKE.

...BUT IN THIS
CASE, I AM
SELLING YOU
A CONCEPT
OR IDEA...

I LEARNED
THIS METHOD
OF TRADE
FROM A
CERTAIN
PERSON...

NEXT, I HAVE
A SUGGES-
TION FOR
HOW YOU
SHOULD OR-
GANIZE YOUR
ECONOMY.

THIS IS
FREE.



I
SEE.

YOU
WISH TO
ESTABLISH
BANKING
FACILITIES.

FOR
THE TIME
BEING...

...IF YOU
WOULD
GRANT US
PERMIS-
SION TO
SET UP
TRADE
HALLS AND
BANKS...

THE ALLIANCE
WILL CONDUCT
TRADE WITHIN
YOUR NEWLY
FORMED
SPHERE OF
INFLUENCE.

YOUR
PROFITS
WILL RISE
FOR FREE.



HOW-
EVER...

...I'M
NOT SURE
MONAS-
TERIES ARE
WORTH THE
INVEST-
MENT.

I BELIEVE
IT WILL BE
IMPORTANT
IN OPPOSING
THE CHURCH
OF HOLY
LIGHTS.

WOULD YOU
BE WILLING
TO DISCUSS
INVESTING OR
FINANCIALLY
BACKING US?



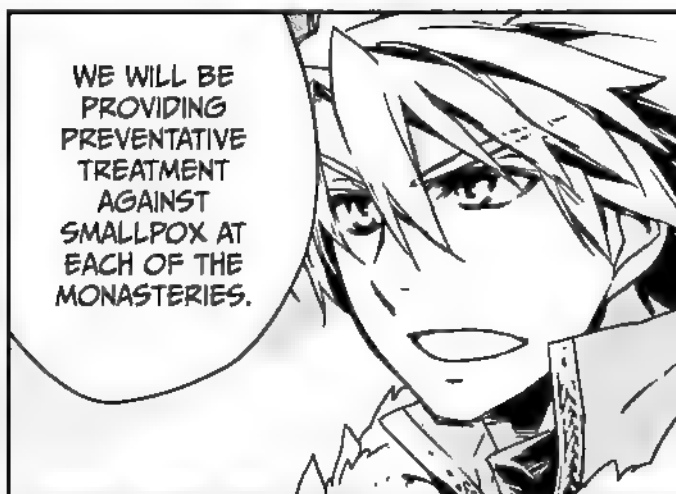
I'D LIKE TO
ESTABLISH
LAKESIDE
CONVENT
MONASTERIES
IN EVERY
KINGDOM...

...BUT WE
DON'T
HAVE THE
MONEY.



IS
THIS
TRUE?

WHAT
?



WE WILL BE
PROVIDING
PREVENTATIVE
TREATMENT
AGAINST
SMALLPOX AT
EACH OF THE
MONASTERIES.



HOWEVER,
ARE YOU
SURE...

...IT WAS
WISE TO TELL
A MERCHANT
YOU BARELY
KNOW ABOUT
THIS SECRET?

THE ALLIANCE
WILL PROVIDE
YOU WITH TWO
MILLION COINS
IN FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FOR
THE FIRST
YEAR.

VERY
WELL.



IS IT
HER
IDEA?

ON OF
HER
KIN'S.



YES.

BOTH
OF THE
CRIMSON
SCHOL-
ARS ARE.



...AS
WELL AS
NOBLE
AND
INTEL-
LIGENT.

I DO
NOT
SEE
HER
OFTEN...

...BUT
SHE IS
BOTH
BEAUTI-
FUL...



YES.

DO YOU
REMEM-
BER THE
CRIMSON
SCHOL-
AR?



HOW-
EVER,
I AM A
MER-
CHANT.

WHEN IT
COMES
TO TRADE,
I WILL
NOT BACK
DOWN.

THAT'S
FINE.



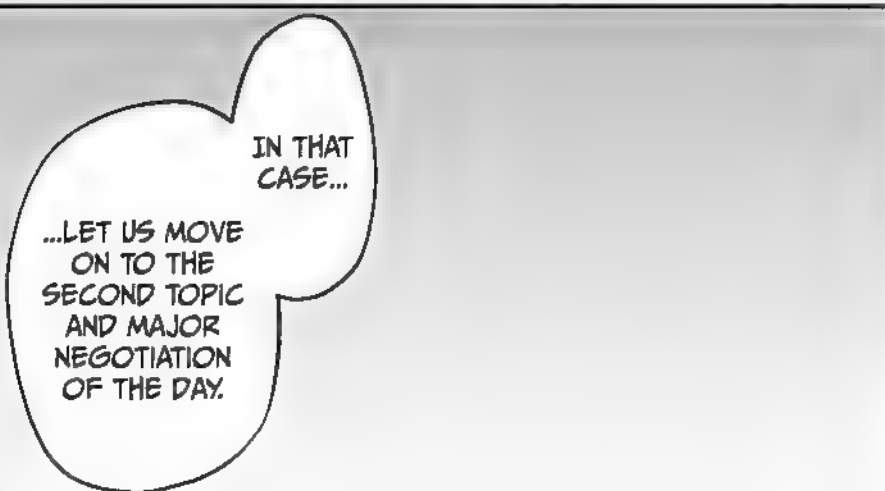
I THINK I
UNDER-
STAND.



I SENSED
THE SEED
SHE HAD
PLANTED
INSIDE
YOU HAD
SPROUTED.

SHE
SEEMS
TO SOW
SEEDS
IN THE
HEARTS...

...OF
EVERY-
ONE SHE
MEETS.



IN THAT
CASE...

...LET US MOVE
ON TO THE
SECOND TOPIC
AND MAJOR
NEGOTIATION
OF THE DAY.



...SO
THAT WE
MAY BEGIN
TRADING
WITH THEM.

THE ALLIANCE
ASKS THAT
YOU REACH A
CEASE-FIRE
AGREEMENT
WITH THE
DEMONS...



WE CAN'T
NEGOTI-
ATE WITH
THEM!

WE'RE
DEALING
WITH
DEMONS
HERE!



SIR...

BECAUSE
I AM A
MERCHANT,
I BELIEVE
WE CAN
DO IT.

I AM
WILL-
ING TO
RISK
MY
LIFE.

BECAUSE
I AM
WHO I
AM...

YOU'RE
NOT THE
ONLY ONES
RISKING
THEIR LIVES.

WE
CAN.



THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO THIS.

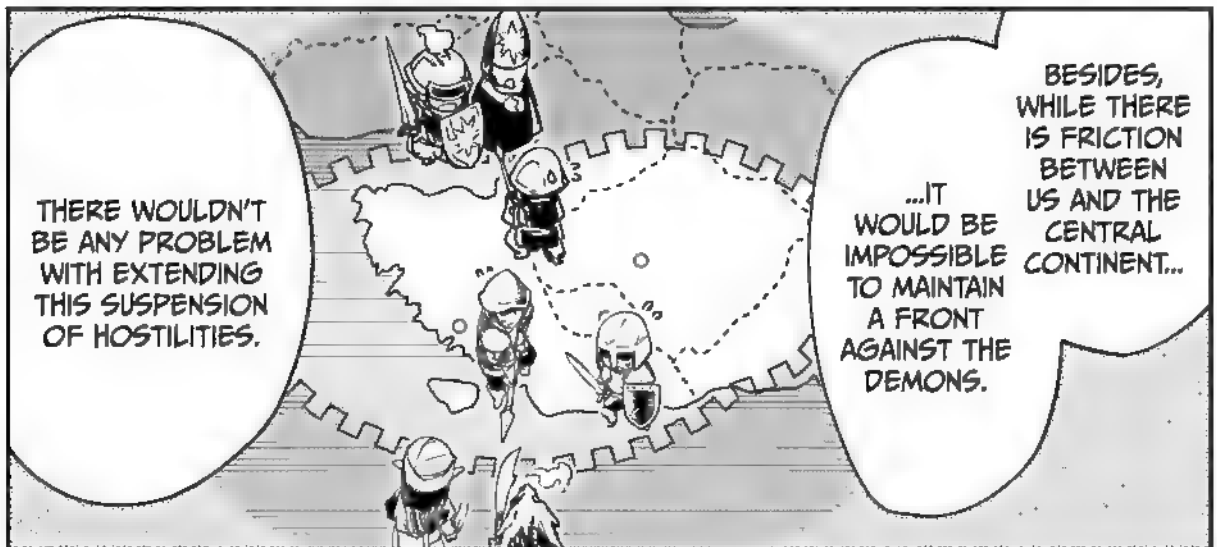
"I WOULD LIKE TO GO THERE AND TRADE."

"WE'RE CURRENTLY AT WAR WITH OUR NEIGHBORING KINGDOM, BUT IT'S ACTUALLY A SOURCE OF INCREDIBLE SPECIALTY PRODUCTS."



I AM THE SON OF A MERCHANT FAMILY.

I THINK I UNDERSTAND HOW THE YOUNG MERCHANT FEELS.



THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEM WITH EXTENDING THIS SUSPENSION OF HOSTILITIES.

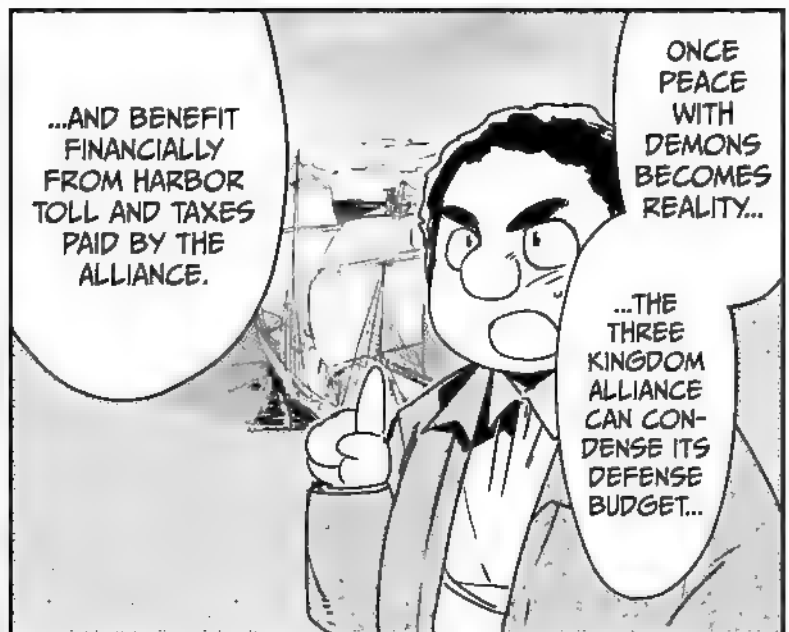
BESIDES, WHILE THERE IS FRICTION BETWEEN US AND THE CENTRAL CONTINENT...
...IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN A FRONT AGAINST THE DEMONS.



HE'S USING SYMPATHY AND PROFITS TO CONVINCE THEM.

NOT BAD.

WELL, WELL.



...AND BENEFIT FINANCIALLY FROM HARBOR TOLL AND TAXES PAID BY THE ALLIANCE.

ONCE PEACE WITH DEMONS BECOMES REALITY...

...THE THREE KINGDOM ALLIANCE CAN CONDENSE ITS DEFENSE BUDGET...



I
SEE.



...TO
GIVE AN
IMMEDIATE
RESPONSE.

THIS
MATTER IS
FAR TOO
IMPOR-
TANT...



WHEN
IT WAS
POINTED
OUT TO
ME, I
REAL-
IZED...

...WE
KNOW
TOO
LITTLE
ABOUT
THE
SPIRIT
WORLD.



HOW-
EVER...

...WE WILL
DISPATCH AN
INVESTIGATIVE
COMMITTEE
TO THE SPIRIT
WORLD IM-
MEDIATELY.



SOMETHING
DOESN'T
SEEM RIGHT.

BUT FOR
SOME
REASON,
ALL WE
KNOW...

...ARE
NIGHTMAR-
ISH SCENES
OF BATTLE
STRAIGHT
OUT OF FAIRY
TALES.



WE'VE SENT
TWO HOLY
KEY EXPE-
DITIONARY
FORCES AND
CLOSE TO
100 MILLION
PEOPLE
TOTAL INTO
THE SPIRIT
WORLD.

IT WOULDN'T
BE STRANGE
IF WE HEARD
STORIES OF
THEIR CUSTOMS,
INDUSTRIES,
OR EVEN THEIR
LANDSCAPES.



I SUSPECT
OUR TWO
WORLDS MAY
BE MORE
SIMILAR...

...THAN WE
THINK.



WHAT ARE MASTER.
WE DOING IN
THIS DARK
AND DAMP
PLACE?

MORNING
STAR
SKYLARK



GATEWAY CITY
UNDERGROUND







I'M GLAD
YOU ARE
THE REAL
ONE.

THE
HERO IS
GOOD.



YES.

...THE
HERO
...

BUT...



I AM THE
SHODDY
NIGHTMARE.

I WAS
BORN AN
IMPOS-
TOR.



...OR
BORN
THAT
WAY...

NOT
BECAUSE I
WAS MADE
THAT WAY...

...BUT
BECAUSE
I WAS
TOUCHED.

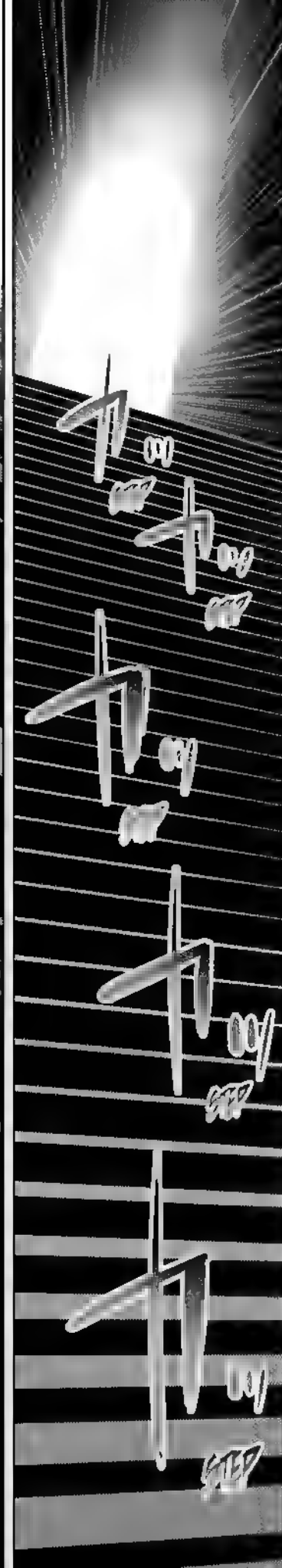


IF I
DESIRE...

...I
COULD
BE A
SPARE
INSTEAD
OF AN
IMPOS-
TOR.

I COULD
PUT THIS
NIGHTMARE
TO SLEEP...

...AND
RETURN
TO THE
TRUE BUT
LONELY
DREAM.



ROAR

I
CHOOSE
...

...TO
WALK
BY THE
HERO'S
SIDE...

...FOR-
EVER.





**MY
COM-
PATRI-
OTS!**

**MY
PEO-
PLE!**

**I AM
GRATEFUL
YOU
ENDURED
THESE LONG
DAYS OF
ANGUISH!**





FROM NOW ON, THE CITY WILL RECEIVE PROTECTION AS A TERRITORY UNDER MY DIRECT CONTROL.

I AM PLEASED WE WERE ABLE TO RECOVER GATEWAY CITY...

...OUR SACRED LAND FROM THE HUMANS.



I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE TWO YEARS I SPENT LYING LOW.



...AND STRAYED FROM THE LAWS I ESTABLISHED.

WHILE I WAS GONE, THERE WERE THOSE WHO WAVED FLAGS OF REBELLION...



HUH?

OH, OKAY.

HERO.

LIKE "GRAAAWR!"

DO SOMETHING TO IMPRESS THEM!

WHISPER

WHISPER



HUH?



THE BLACK KNIGHT, MY LOYAL SWORD AND COMMANDER...

...HAS PURGED THEM WITH HIS MIGHTY SWORD!

FWOOSH



ROAR



KABOOM

FLASH



GOOD, AD-
LIBBING,
DEMON
QUEEN!

CLENCH

UH, OH
I WENT
TOO
FAR

CHEER

AMAZING!

THE BLACK
KNIGHT IS
AMAZING!

ROAR

BEHOLD
THE
MIGHT OF
MY COM-
MANDER!

BE...



WE ARE
STANDING AT
A CROSS-
ROADS IN
HISTORY!



TODAY I
HAVE A
MESSAGE
FOR YOU!

...WE HAVE
LEARNED
HOW THEY
LOOK...

...AND WE
KNOW THEIR
STRENGTH
AND CHAR-
ACTER!

IN THE
20 SHORT
YEARS
SINCE WE
ENCOUN-
TERED THE
HUMANS...

CHEER

...SUMMON
THE DEMON
CLANS FOR
A KURULTAI!

...I...

I
NOW AN-
NOUNCE

...AS
THE 43RD
DEMON
MONARCH
OF RUBY
EYES...

ROAD



...I...

ROAD



I
NOW AN-
NOUNCE

...

...AS
THE 43RD
DEMON
MONARCH
OF RUBY
EYES...

A black and white manga-style illustration of a large, dense crowd of people. Many individuals have their mouths open as if shouting or cheering. Several large, stylized starburst or 'X' marks are drawn over the crowd, emphasizing the intensity of the scene. In the bottom right corner, a portion of a curved structure with two small, pointed objects is visible.

CHEER

**...SUMMON
THE DEMON
CLANS FOR
A KURULTAI!**



WHAT?

CHEER

WE'LL
CRUSH
THEM
THIS
TIME!

ROAR

THE DAY
HAS
FINALLY
COME!

IT'S ALL
OUT WAR
AGAINST
THE HU-
MANS!

DEMON
QUEEN!

DEMON
QUEEN!

DEMON
QUEEN!

CHEER



HEY!

EVERYTHING
WILL BE
DECIDED BY
THE CLAN
LEADERS
OF THE
KURULTAI!



DEMON
QUEEN!

KILL
THEM!

DESTROY
THE
HUMANS!



ROAR

NO!

WHAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
MEANT!



THE
DEMON
QUEEN IS
SUM-
MONING
THEM!

SPREAD
THE WORD
TO THE
CORNERS
OF THE
SPIRIT
WORLD!

ROAR



WHAT
IS
THIS?

IS IT
MAGIC?

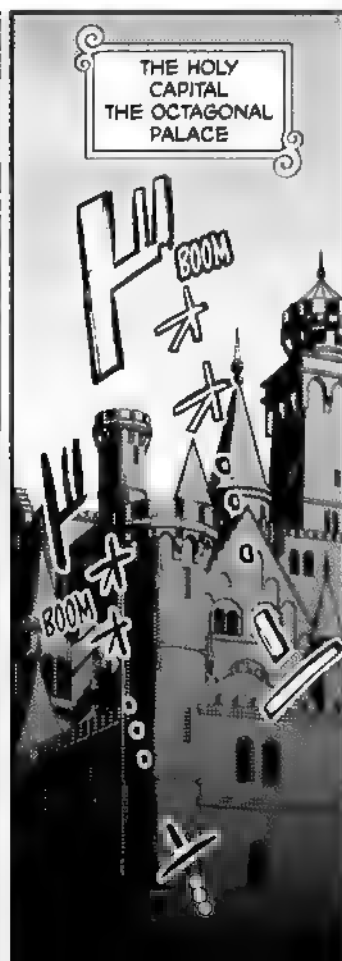


SHUDDER

SHUDDER

TREMBLE

TREMBLE



THE HOLY
CAPITAL
THE OCTAGONAL
PALACE

BOOM

BOOM



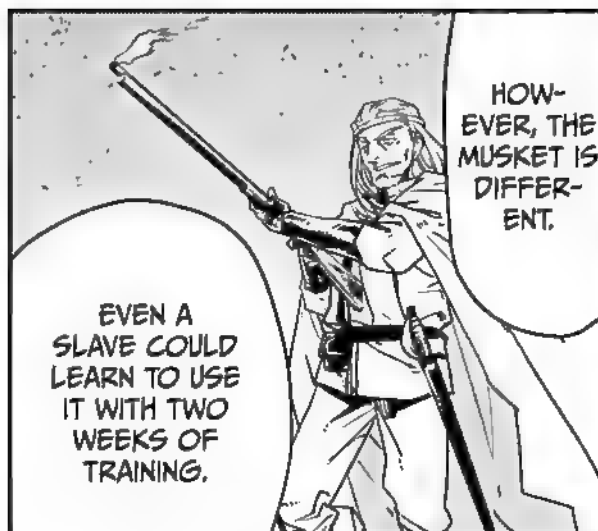
IT'S NOT
MAGIC.

IT'S A
MUSKET.

IT USES THE
EXPLOSION
OF BLACK
POWDER
TO PROPEL
PROJECTILES
TOWARD YOUR
ENEMIES.

IT'S A
MACHINE THAT
ALLOWS
THOSE WHO
CAN'T CAST
MAGIC TO
CREATE
INTERMEDIATE
FIREBALLS.

THE ROYAL
PRINCE
MARSHAL



HOW-
EVER, THE
MUSKET IS
DIFFER-
ENT.

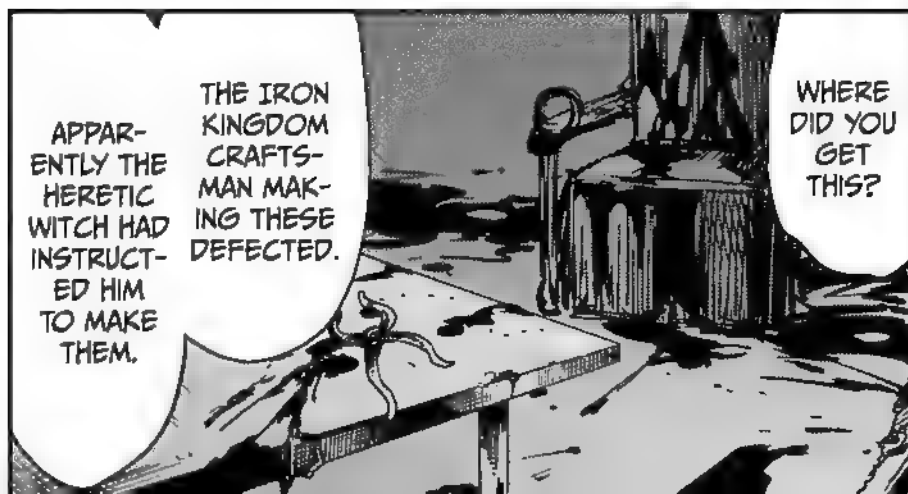
EVEN A
SLAVE COULD
LEARN TO USE
IT WITH TWO
WEEKS OF
TRAINING.



IT TAKES
OVER FIVE
YEARS TO
TRAIN A MA-
GICIAN WHO
CAN CAST
INTERMEDIATE
FIREBALLS.

ITS
GREATEST
FEATURE
IS THE
TRAINING IT
REQUIRES.

IT TAKES
OVER A YEAR
TO TRAIN AN
ARCHER.



APPAR-
ENTLY THE
HERETIC
WITCH HAD
INSTRUCT-
ED HIM
TO MAKE
THEM.

THE IRON
KINGDOM
CRAFTS-
MAN MAK-
ING THESE
DEFECTED.

WHERE
DID YOU
GET
THIS?



!!



DO YOU
FIND THE
CONTRACT
WE DIS-
CUSSED
AGREE-
ABLE?

YES.



MAKE
PREPARA-
TIONS TO
MASS-
PRODUCE
MUSKETS!

IF WE
SUCCEED AT
PRODUCING
THESE, IT
WILL CHANGE
WARS.

IT WILL
ALLOW US
TO BRING
10 TIMES AS
MANY MEN
TO BATTLE!



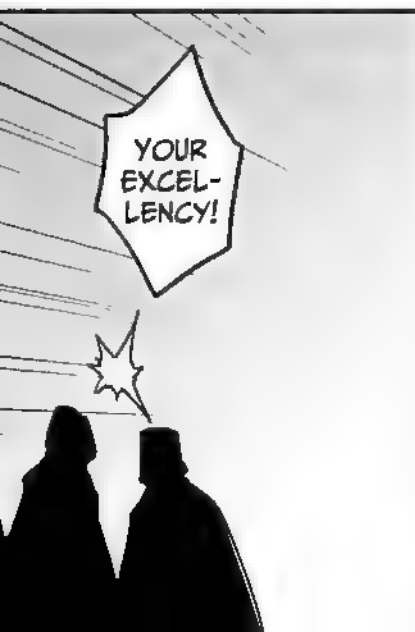
...THE BLUE
DEMONS WILL
PLAY THE
PART OF THE
CHURCH'S
ENEMY...

...SO YOU CAN
CONTINUE
YOUR REIGN.

AS LONG
AS YOU
ADHERE
TO OUR
SECRET
AGREE-
MENT...

ONCE OUR
GREATEST
DESIRE IS
ACHIEVED
...

...WE
WILL GIVE
YOU THE
SOUTHERN
KINGDOMS.



YOUR
EXCEL-
LENCY!

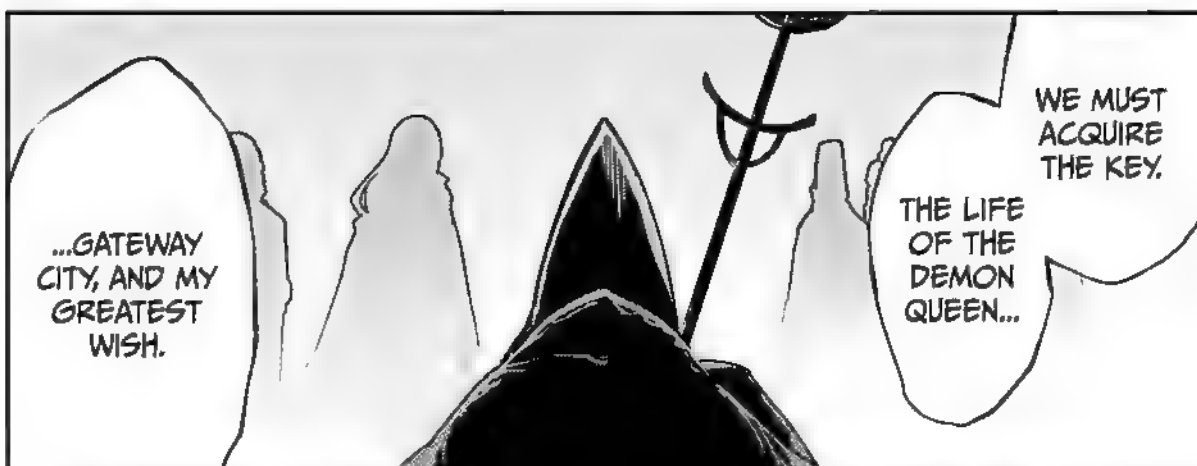
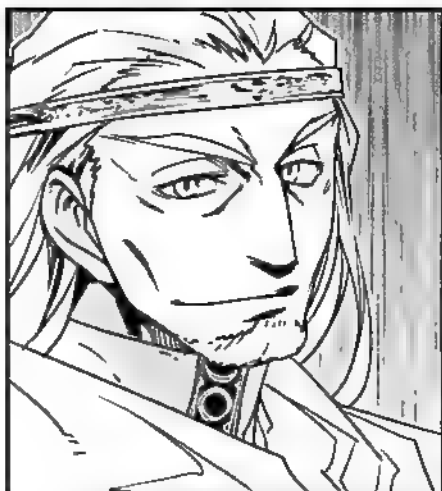


I HEAR
VOICES
CALLING.

I HEAR
VOICES.



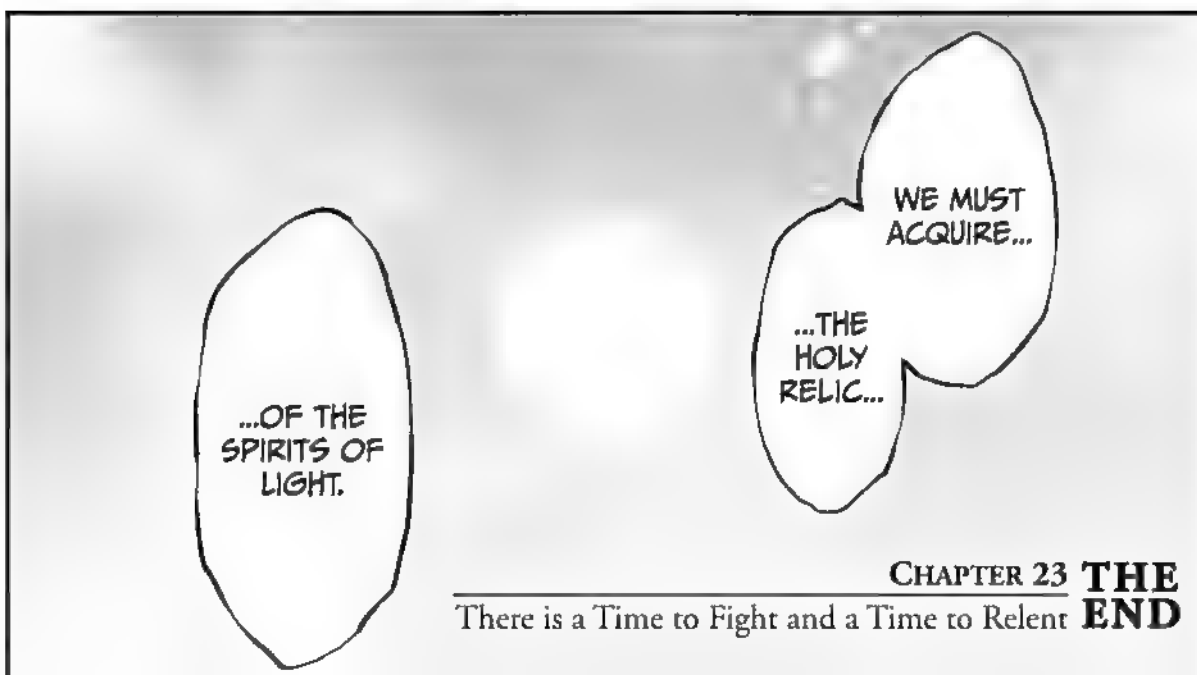
MOBILIZE THE
THIRD HOLY KEY
EXPEDITIONARY
FORCE.



...GATEWAY
CITY, AND MY
GREATEST
WISH.

THE LIFE
OF THE
DEMON
QUEEN...

WE MUST
ACQUIRE
THE KEY.



...OF THE
SPIRITS OF
LIGHT.

...THE
HOLY
RELIC...

WE MUST
ACQUIRE...

THE HUMAN WORLD

Humanity's perception of the world approaches reality little by little through expanding the limits of their perception and scientific explanations.

HUMANITY'S "WORLD" EXPANDED WITH THE SCOPE OF THEIR PERCEPTION

Since ancient times, humans have imagined a variety of forms for the world they live in. For example, according to Northern European mythology, the world exists on top of a giant tree called Yggdrasil. In ancient India, the world was believed to be carried by animals such as turtles and elephants.

While science was still underdeveloped, the scope of human perception was very small. The only information they received about the outside world came from the occasional visitor. They could only imagine what lay beyond the scope of what they could perceive for themselves.

This was especially true in the early days of the rise of civilization. For example, in Babylon during the 19th to 17th Centuries BCE, the world only extended to the farthest mountains people could see from where they lived. Their situation was precisely what the Demon Queen described when she asked the Hero what lies beyond the hill.

SCIENCE OVERTURNED COMMON KNOWLEDGE

However, as civilization developed and humanity's area of activity expanded, different civilizations made contact with one another. Through contact, information became uniform, and the world gradually began to reveal its true form to humankind.

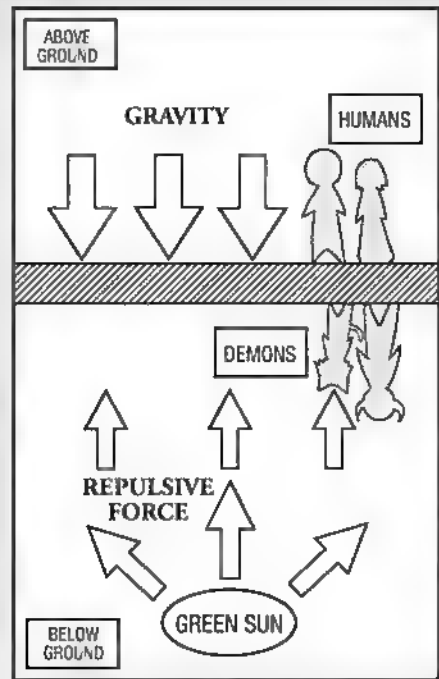
Copernicus' announcement of his heliocentric theory in the middle of the 16th Century greatly influenced other scientists. Though his theory was still incomplete when it was announced, the later efforts of scientists such as Johannes Kepler and Isaac Newton filled in the holes. The geocentric theory people had believed in since ancient Greece was finally overturned.

Proving the heliocentric theory demonstrating to humankind that common knowledge may not be true. It helped promote the idea of doubting common knowledge among scientific communities.

In this work, the Spirit World previously believed to be an entirely different world was shown to exist on the underside of the Human World. Already demons and humans coexist in Gateway City, and there are individuals such as the Young Merchant who seeks to trade with demons. Pay close attention to how their actions change the world going forward.



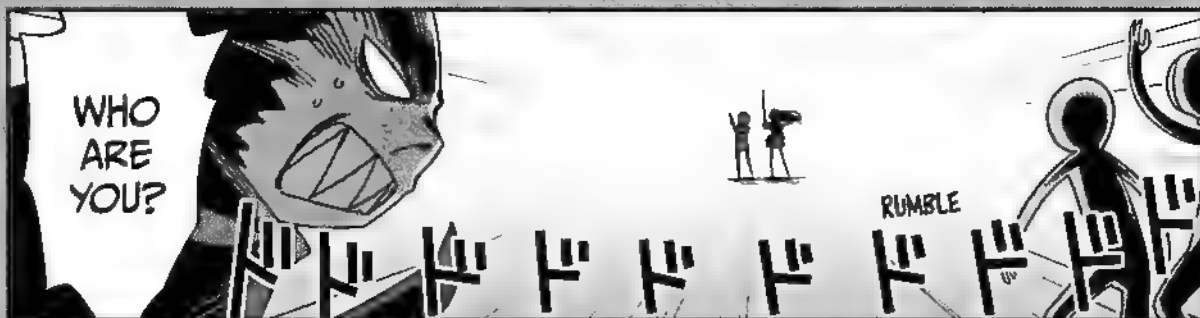
The Young Merchant's desire to being trading with demons is proof the world is changing.



The Spirit World is not another world, but rather a world that exists inside the surface of the Human World.

RETURNING HOME

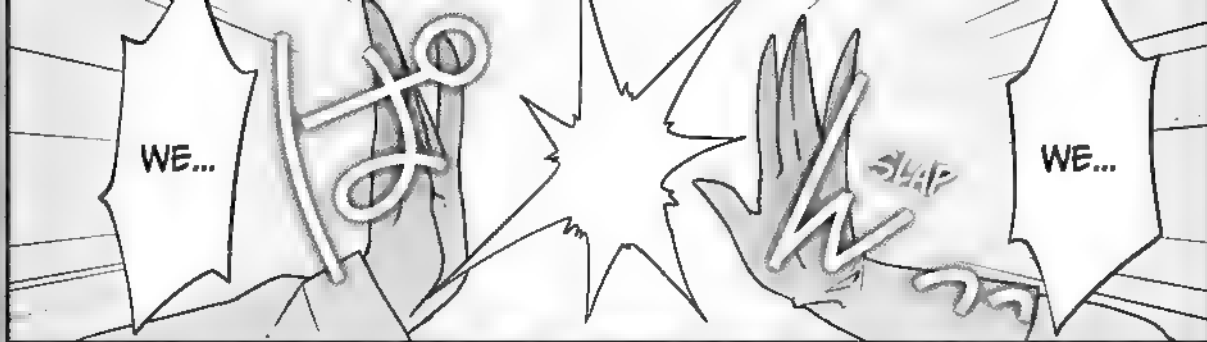


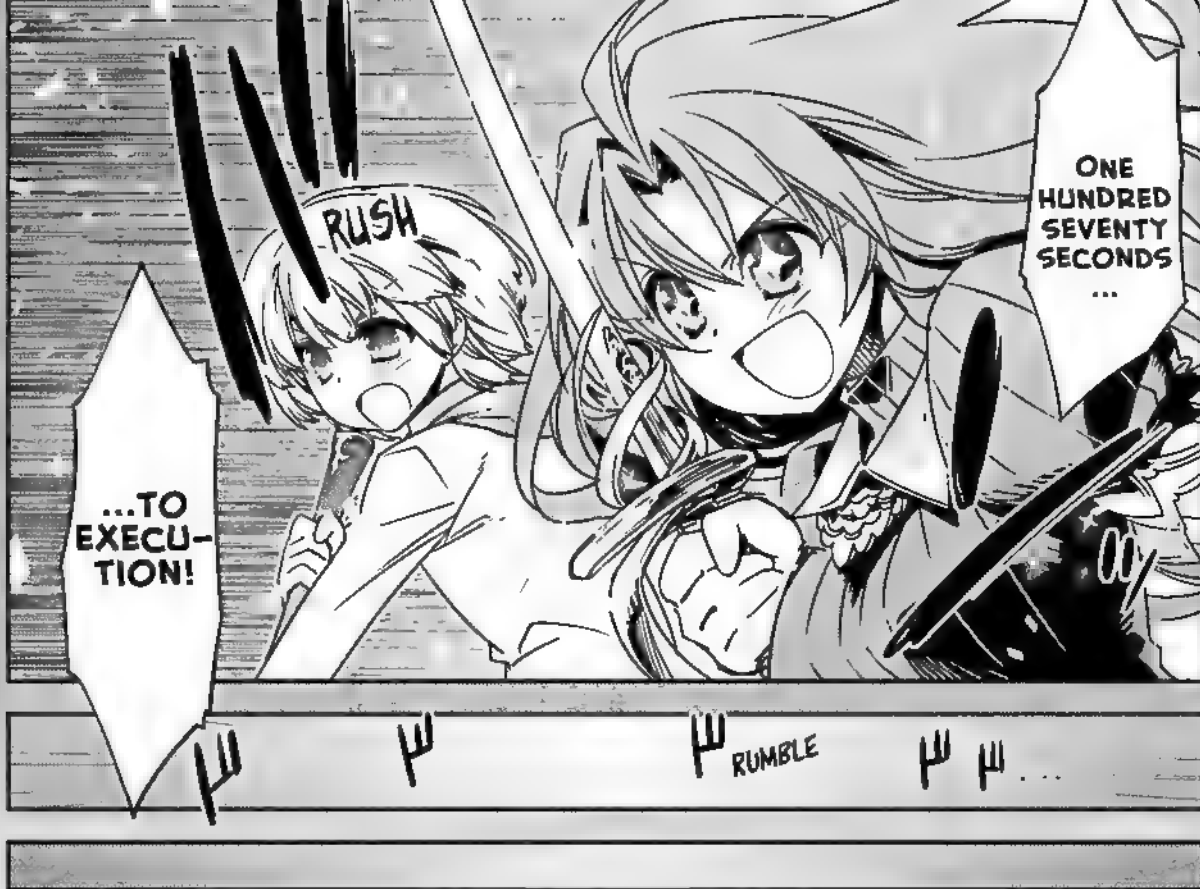


MAOYU

Arch-enemy and Hero

CHAPTER 24



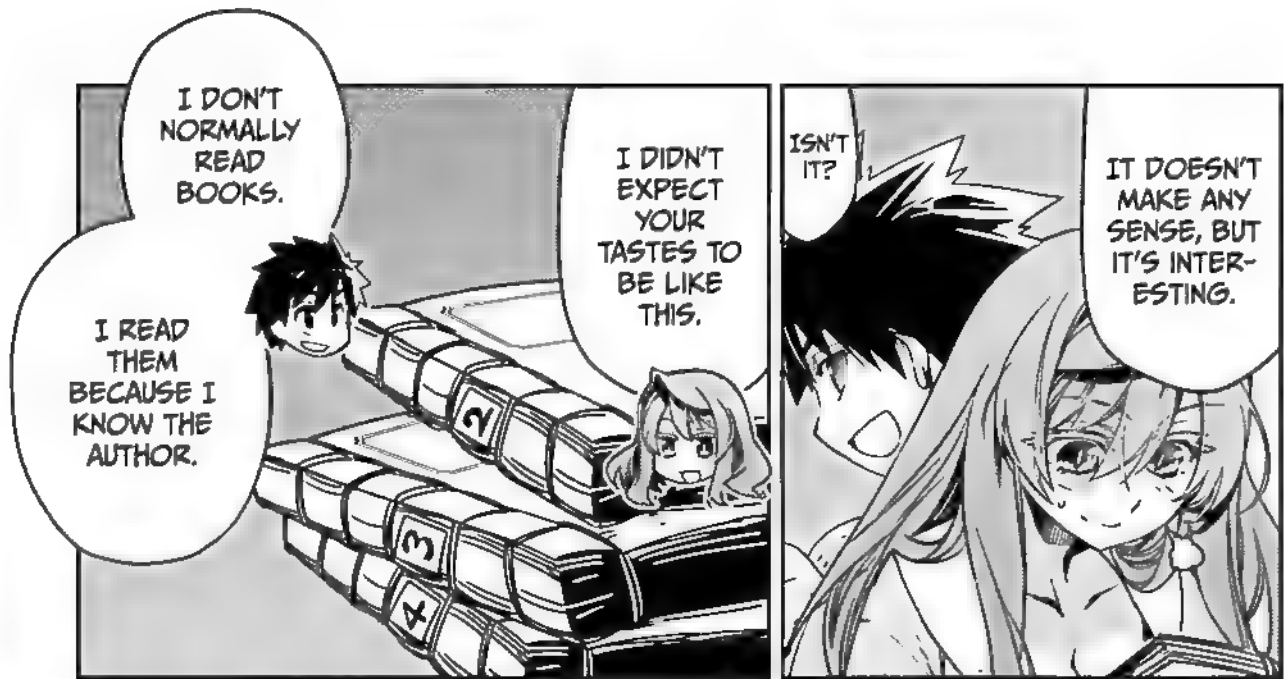


CHAPTER 24 Archenemy and Hero

I Love This World









IS
THAT
CLEAR
?

PLEASE
STOP
WORKING
FOR A
WHILE.

I WILL
CHECK HOW
YOU TWO DID
WITH YOUR
DUTIES WHILE
I WAS GONE.

YOU
TWO.



THE CHIEF
MAID IS
PRETTY HIGH
STRUNG,
THOUGH.



SITTING
BACK TO
BACK WITH
YOU WHILE
READING...

...FEELS
KIND OF
STRANGE.



SHE WAS
PROBABLY
BEING CON-
SIDERATE.

IT'S HER
WAY OF
TELLING
THEM TO
TAKE A
BREAK.

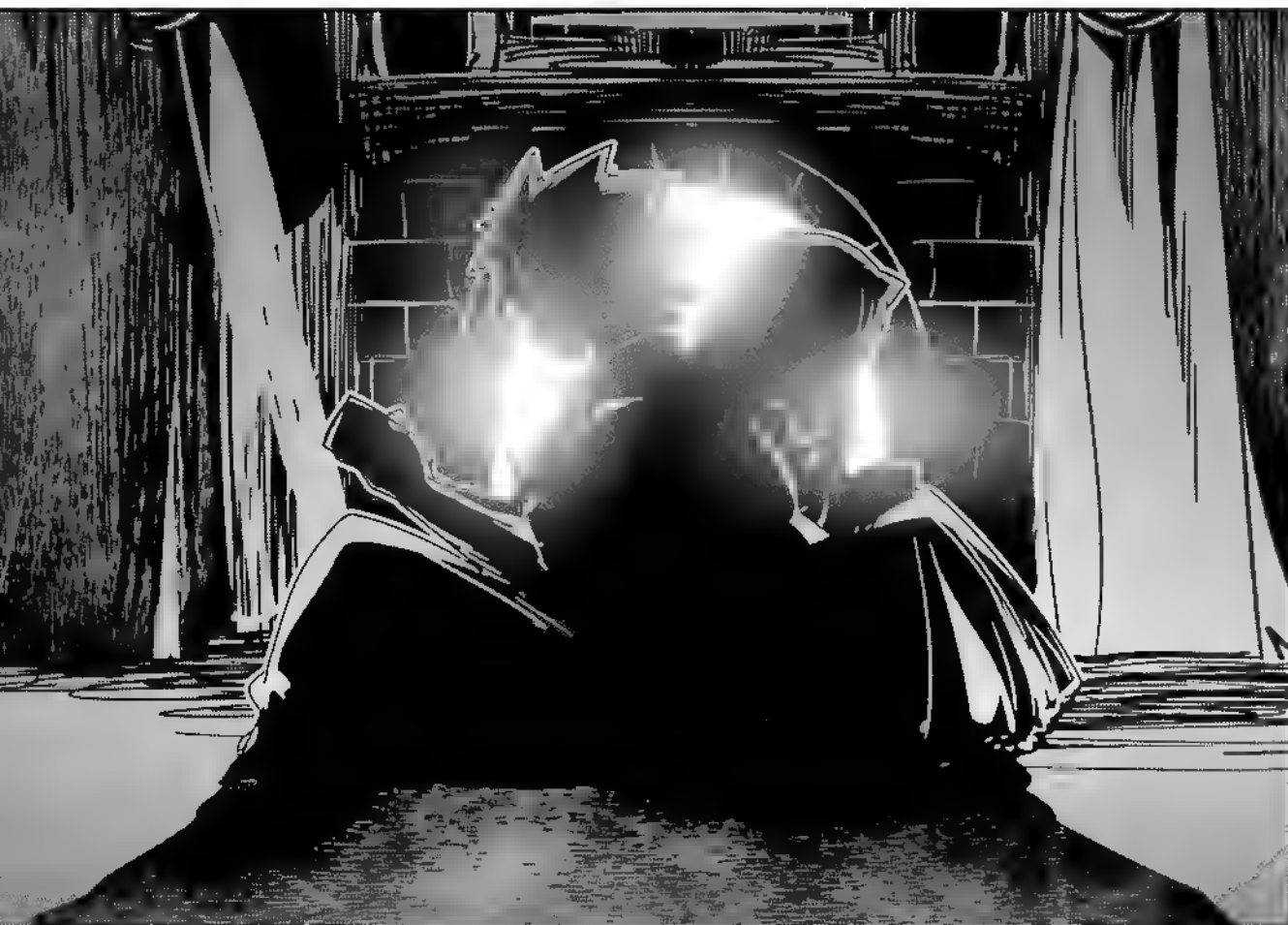
OH, I
SEE.

SHE'S
NOT
VERY
DIRECT,
IS SHE?



I WOULD
NEVER HAVE
IMAGINED A
FEW YEARS
AGO...

...THAT
I'D BE
READING
WITH THE
DEMON
QUEEN.



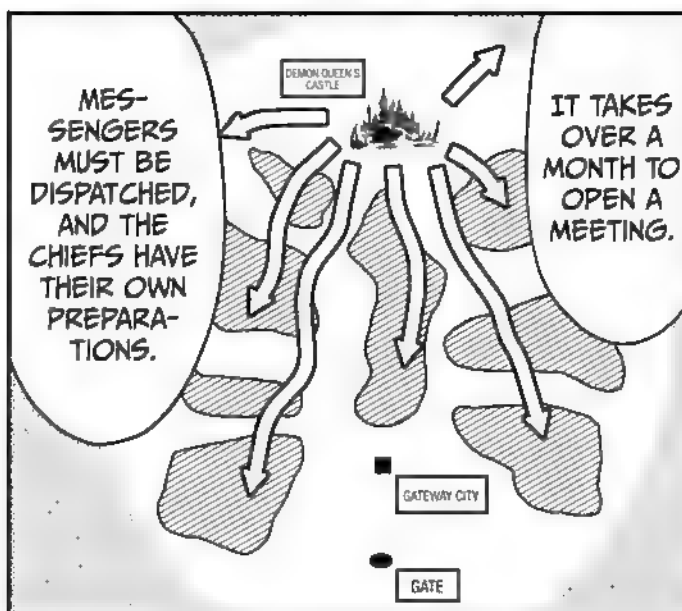


SHOULD YOU
HAVE RETURNED
HERE AFTER
MAGNIFICENTLY
PROCLAIMING
YOU'D HOLD A
MEETING?



ANYWAY,
UM...

...THE
KURULTAI,
WAS IT?



MES-
SENGERS
MUST BE
DISPATCHED,
AND THE
CHIEFS HAVE
THEIR OWN
PREPARA-
TIONS.

IT TAKES
OVER A
MONTH TO
OPEN A
MEETING.



IT'S
CALLED A KURUL-
TAI.

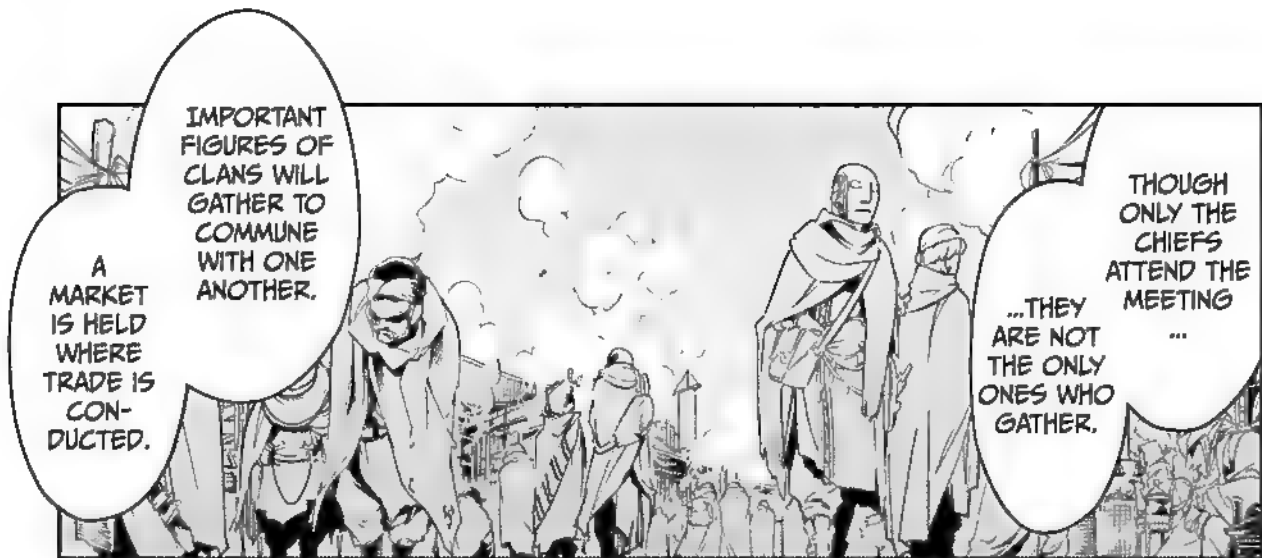
IT'S A
MEETING OF
THE DEMON
CLAN CHIEFS
THAT MAKES
DECISIONS ON
IMPORTANT
MATTERS.



TWO IS
ON THE HIGH
END FOR THE
NUMBER OF
KURULTAIS
A SINGLE
DEMON
MONARCH
HOLDS.

SOME
DEMON
MONARCHS
NEVER
HELD A
SINGLE
ONE.

KURULTAIS
ARE HUGE
GATHERINGS.
THEY'RE NOT
HELD VERY
OFTEN.





IT'S ALL
RIGHT.
IT WILL
WORK
OUT.

....

WE'LL BE
DISCUSSING
WHETHER
WE SHOULD
RECONSIDER
OUR RELA-
TIONSHIP
WITH
HUMANS.

YES.



IS THE
SUBJECT
OF THIS
MEETING
...



DEMON
QUEEN.

DINNER IS
READY.



KNOCK

KNOCK

...I WILL
HAVE TO
GATHER
DOCUMENTS
AND NEGOTIA-
TION MATERI-
ALS FROM
THE MANSION
AND SURFACE
WORLD.

FOR THE
MEETING...



...THE
ACTIONS
I TOOK
WHILE
IN YOUR
FORM...

BUT...

HOW
MANY
TIMES
IS
THIS?

I TOLD
YOU, IT'S
ALL RIGHT.

...WILL
AFFECT
YOUR
FUTURE
EFFORTS.



I'M
SORRY...

...MIS-
TRESS.



I
PLACED
QUITE A
BURDEN
ON YOU.

BESIDES,
MORE THAN
ANYTHING,
I'M GLAD
YOU'RE ALL
RIGHT.



YES, BUT
IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN A
PROBLEM IF
YOU HAD BEEN
KILLED TOO.

THE
CRIMSON
SCHOLAR
WOULD HAVE
BECOME A
GHOST.



THAT'S
ENOUGH.

COME
ON.



NO, I...

NO.

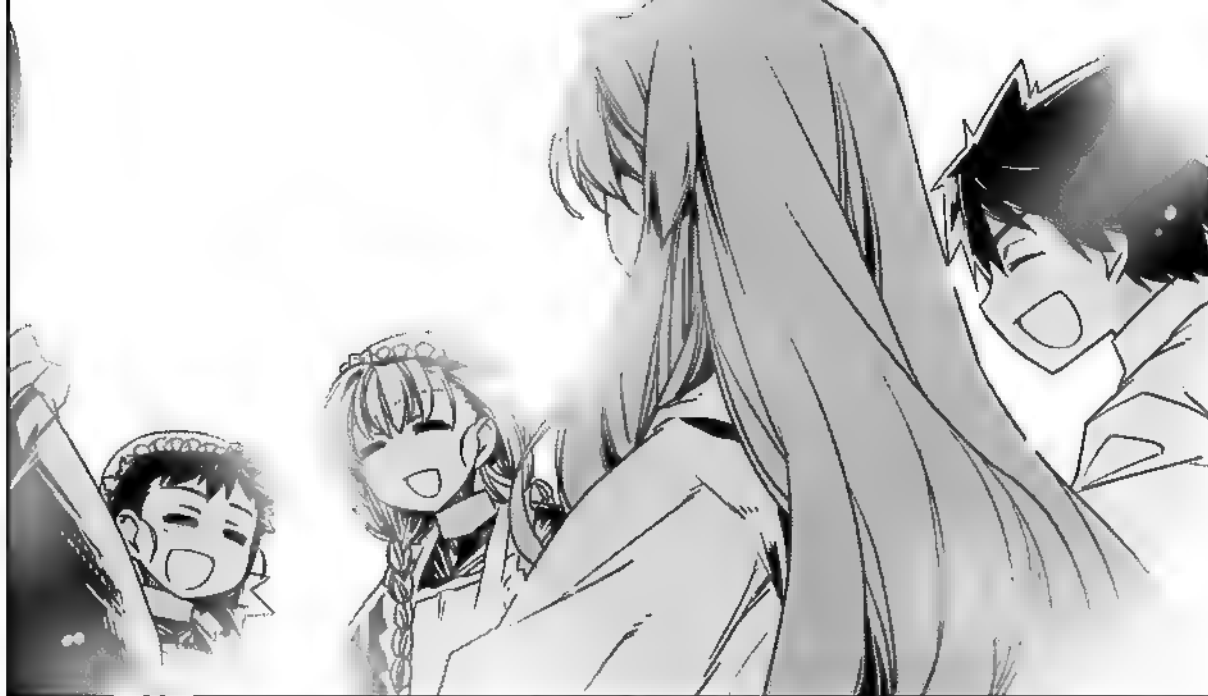


ALL
RIGHT.



THAT'S
RIGHT! THE
FOOD'S
GETTING
COLD.

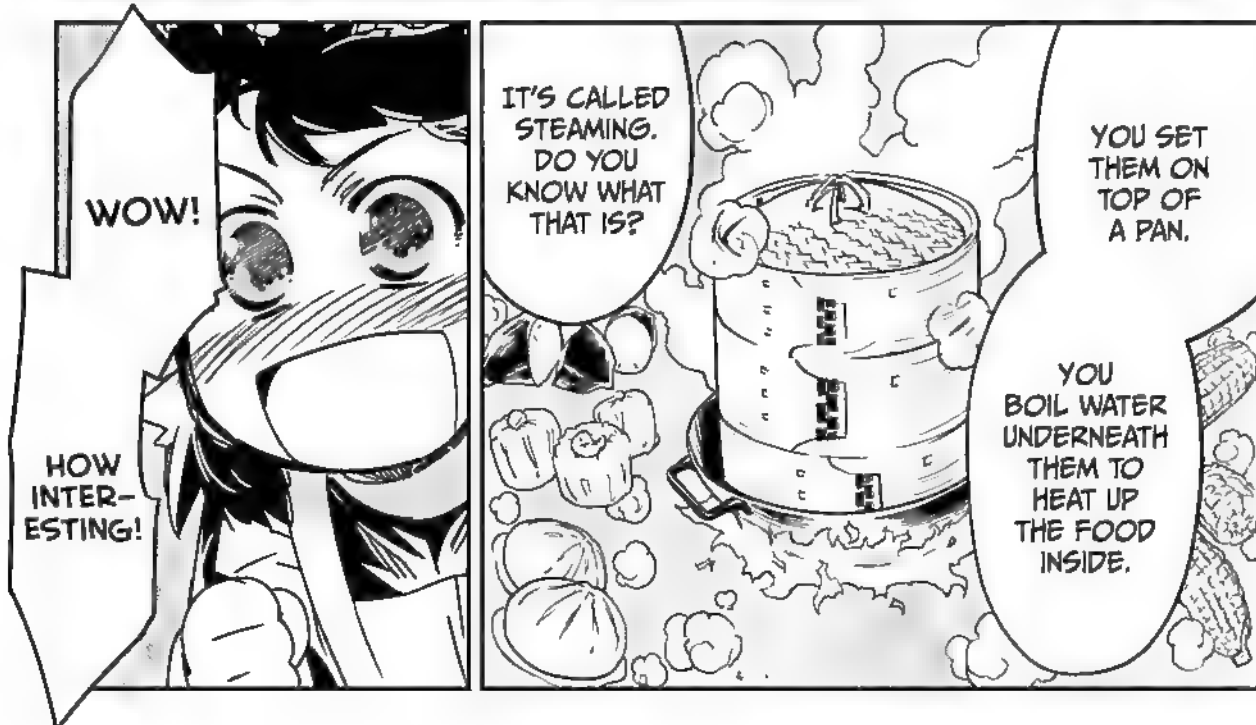




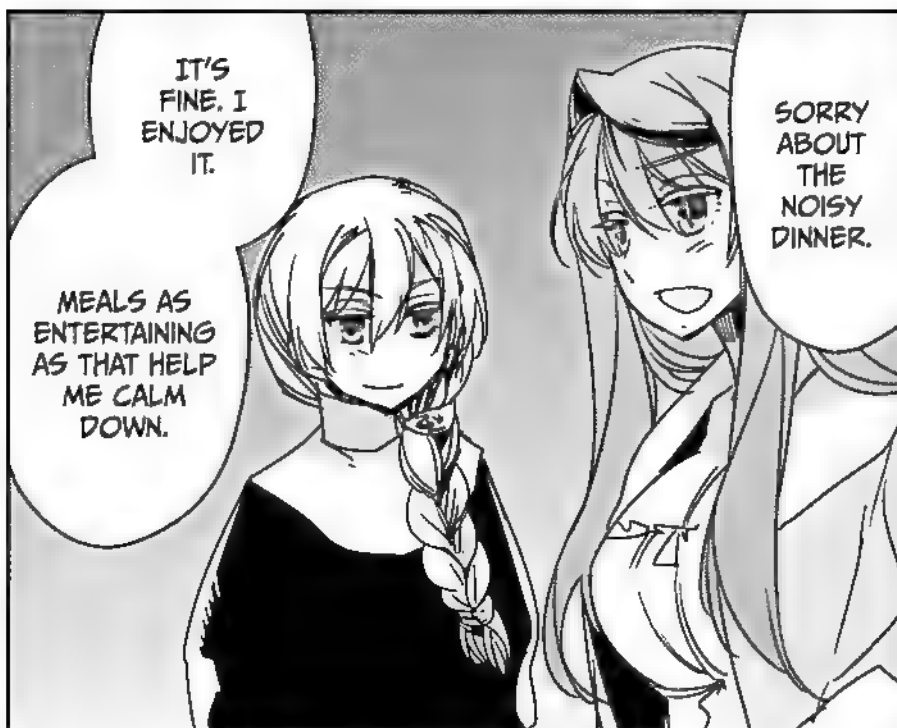












FOR A KNIGHT,
OFFERING
SOMEONE YOUR
SWORD IS AN
IMPORTANT...

...RITUAL
OF COM-
MITMENT.

WHILE
YOU
WERE
GONE...

...I OF-
FERED
MY
SWORD
TO THE
HERO.

THERE'S
SOMETHING
I WANT TO
DISCUSS
WITH YOU
TONIGHT.

IT MEANS
LOVING
YOUR MASTER
AND DOING
EVERYTHING
YOU CAN
FOR HIM.

IT MEANS
BECOM-
ING YOUR
MASTER'S
POSSES-
SION.

I OF-
FERED
THAT
OATH...

...TO
THE
HERO.

OFFERING
SOMEONE
YOUR SWORD
MEANS
DEVOTING
YOURSELF
COMPLETELY
TO YOUR
MASTER.

IT MEANS
WORKING
FOR YOUR
MASTER AND
FIGHTING
FOR THEM
ON THE
BATTLE-
FIELD.

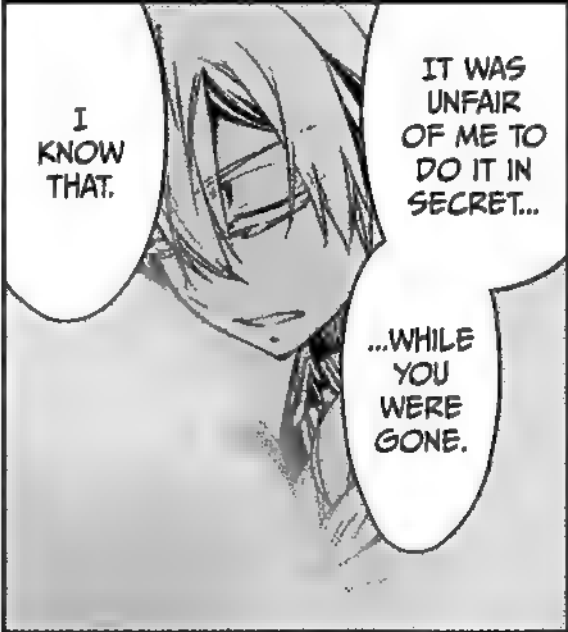
KNIGHTS
HAVE
MASTERS.

THEY
BECOME
FULLY-
FLEDGED
KNIGHTS
ONCE THEY
OFFER THEIR
SWORD TO
THEIR LORD.



I ALSO
BELIEVE...

...IT'S
POSSIBLE
I FORCED
THE HERO
INTO IT.



I
KNOW
THAT.

IT WAS
UNFAIR
OF ME TO
DO IT IN
SECRET...

...WHILE
YOU
WERE
GONE.



OFFERING
THE HERO MY
SWORD IS
MY SOUL'S
GREATEST
DESIRE.

BUT I
CANNOT
TAKE IT
BACK.



IN PART
BECAUSE
THE HERO IS
YOURS...

...BUT
ALSO
BECAUSE
YOU SAID
WE WERE
FRIENDS.



HOW-
EVER...

...I
THOUGHT
I SHOULD
TELL YOU.



SINCE LONG
AGO, I HAD
WAITED FOR
THE HERO TO
COME TO ME.

...MY
CONTRACT
OF OWNER-
SHIP WITH
THE HERO
CANNOT BE
BROKEN,
EITHER.

....

JUST AS
A KNIGHT'S
OATH CANNOT
BE BROKEN...



WHAT?



SO IT
CANNOT
BE
HELPED.



YES.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.



THEY
ALLOW ME
TO GET BACK
UP AFTER
ACCEPTING
A PAINFUL
AND HARSH
REALITY.

THOSE
WORDS
ARE FULL
OF COUR-
AGE.

...THOSE
WORDS
HELP ME
MOVE
FOR-
WARD.

...WHEN
I FIND
MYSELF
HAVING
ACCEPT A
COMPRO-
MISE I HAVE
TROUBLE
ACCEPTING
...

HOW-
EVER
...

I DON'T
DISLIKE
SAYING
SOMETHING
CAN'T BE
HELPED.

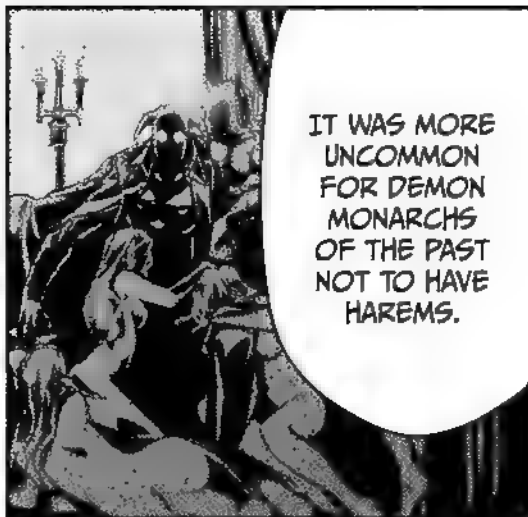
I UNDER-
STAND IT'S
OFTEN
USED AS AN
EXCUSE.

AFTER
ALL, HE IS
THE HERO
WHO WILL
SAVE THE
WORLD.



...I
SHOULD
HAVE
EXPECTED
SOMETHING
OF THIS
SCALE.

THOUGH
I CAN'T
SPEAK
FOR THE
HERO...



IT WAS MORE
UNCOMMON
FOR DEMON
MONARCHS
OF THE PAST
NOT TO HAVE
HAREMS.



I CAN
TOLERATE YOU
MORE THAN
ANY OTHER.

...BE
HELPED
THE
MOST.

...FEMALE
KNIGHT, YOU
ARE THE ONE
THAT CAN'T...

HOW-
EVER...

...OF ALL
THE PEOPLE
WHO SERVE
THE HERO AT
HIS SIDE...



VERY
WELL.

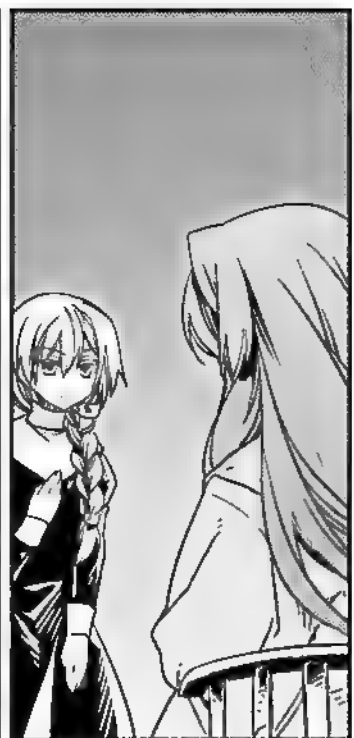


TELL ME,
FEMALE
KNIGHT.

TELL ME
CLEARLY.



DEMON
QUEEN.











I CAME FROM THE HUMAN WORLD.

YES.



TH A...
CLATTER

YOU SAY THAT, BUT...

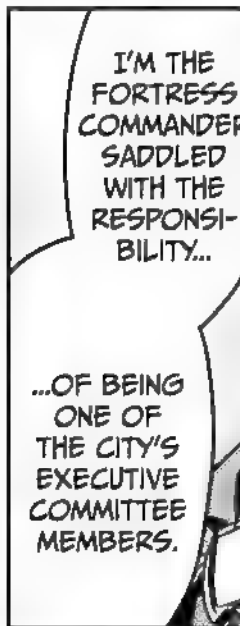
...ARE YOU...



IT'S FROM PRINCESS FIRE DRAGON!



FIRST, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.



I'M THE FORTRESS COMMANDER SADDLED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY...

...OF BEING ONE OF THE CITY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.



IT'S BEEN FOREVER SINCE MY LAST GUEST FROM THE HUMAN WORLD.

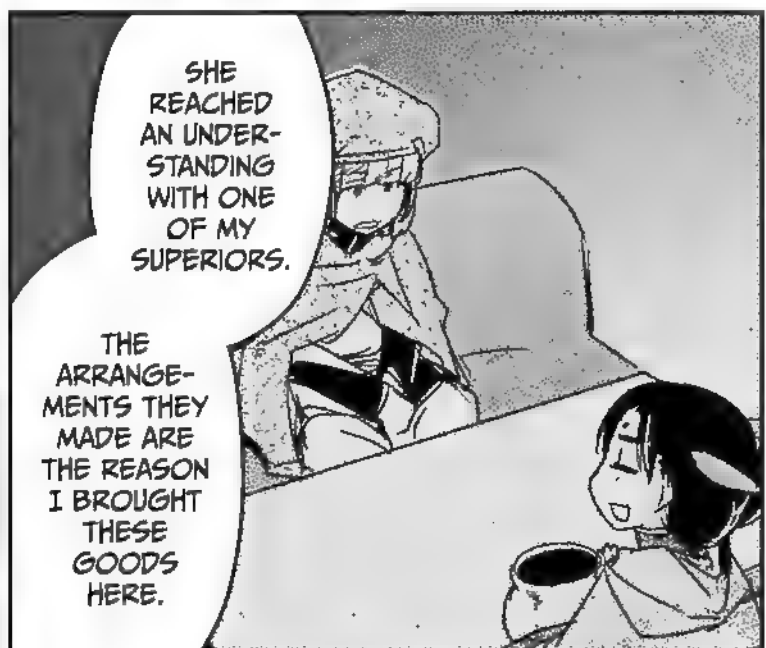
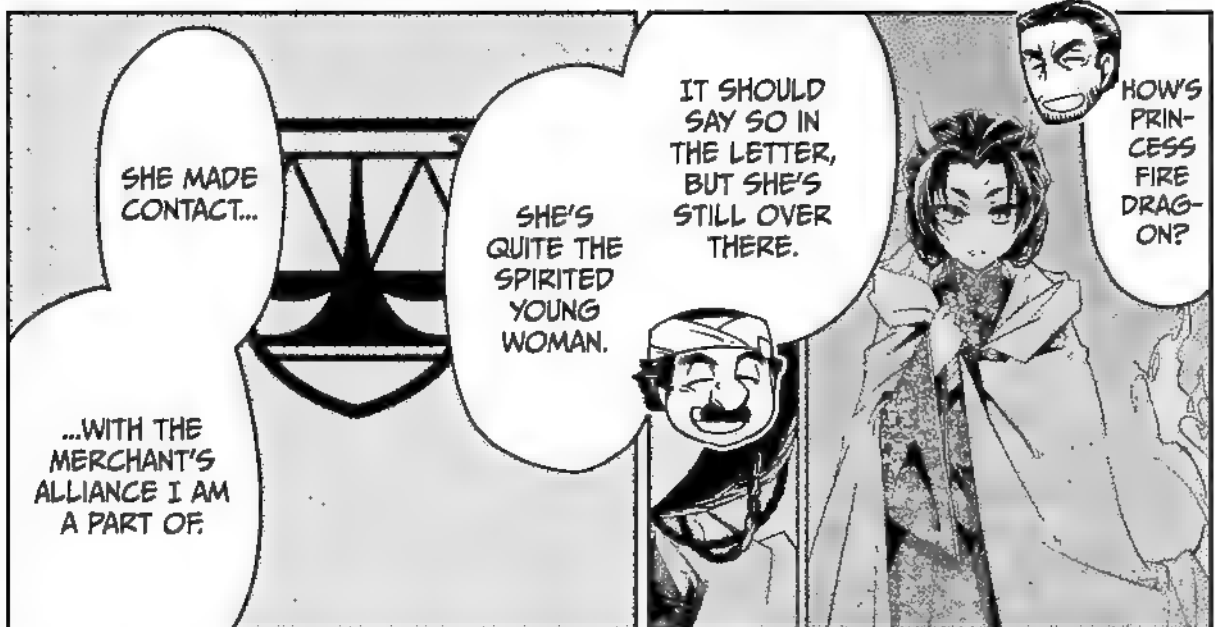
WELCOME TO GATEWAY CITY!



YES.

WE BROUGHT SALT AT HER REQUEST.

WHICH MEANS ...







IT
SEEMS
TO ME...

...CREATING A
SAFE HIGHWAY
THROUGH THE
GIANT HOLE
LEFT BEHIND
BY THE GATE IS
A JOB WORTH
DOING.



JUST
LOOKING AT
THE REPORTS,
YOU CAN
SEE THERE'S
BEEN QUITE
AN UPROAR.

YES.

SOME
MAJOR
CHANGES
SEEM
TO HAVE
HAPPENED.





HE'S EVEN
CREATING
PRIMITIVE
FUTURES.

THE YOUNG
MERCHANT
WAS PLAN-
NING TO
CORNER THE
MARKET.

FROM
THE INQUI-
SITION TO
SMALL-
POX...

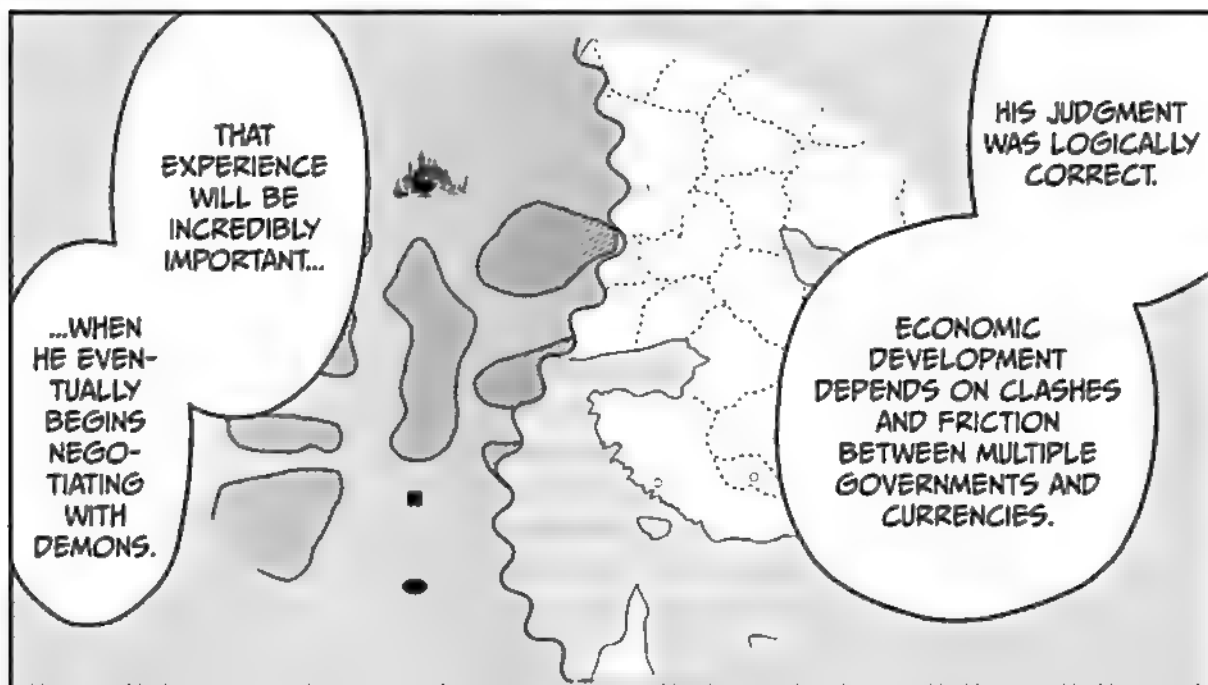
A
STRATEGY
THAT
INVOLVES
INVESTING
ALL YOUR
CAPITAL
SENDS
CHILLS UP
MY SPINE.



HOWEVER, HE
BET ON THE
FORMATION
OF A TWO-
CURRENCY
SYSTEM.

HE
BELIEVES
THERE'S
A FUTURE
IN IT.

FROM HIS
POSITION,
THE YOUNG
MERCHANT
WAS ABLE TO
BECOME THE
HOLY CAPITAL'S
LARGEST
SPONSOR.



THAT
EXPERIENCE
WILL BE
INCREDIBLY
IMPORTANT...

...WHEN
HE EVEN-
TUALLY
BEGINS
NEGO-
TIATING
WITH
DEMONS.

HIS JUDGMENT
WAS LOGICALLY
CORRECT.

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
DEPENDS ON CLASHES
AND FRICTION
BETWEEN MULTIPLE
GOVERNMENTS AND
CURRENCIES.

EVEN IF THE
GATE HADN'T
BEEN BROKEN,
SOMEONE
WOULD HAVE
REALIZED IT
EVENTUALLY.

THE BARRIER
BETWEEN THE
TWO WORLDS
WOULD HAVE
BEEN TORN
DOWN.

THE HUMAN
WORLD AND
SPIRIT WORLD
WERE NEVER
TWO DIFFERENT
WORLDS.

THE GATE
HAS BEEN
BROKEN.

YES.

...THOUGH
IT'S STILL
UNCLEAR
WHETHER
THEY WILL
ENTER
PEACEFUL
NEGOTIA-
TIONS...

...OR
EVEN
GREATER
CONFLICT
AND
WAR.

WITH
THE
GATE
GONE...

...THE HUMAN
AND DEMON
WORLDS
ARE NOW
APPROACH-
ING ONE
ANOTHER...

DID
YOU
SEE
THIS...

...CHIEF
MAID?

YES.

GREATEST
OF ALL...

...IS THE
OLDER
MAID
SISTER.



THIS IS
SOMETHING
I DIDN'T
LEAVE
BEHIND.

THIS...

THIS IS
AMAZING!

IT'S
INCREDIBLE!

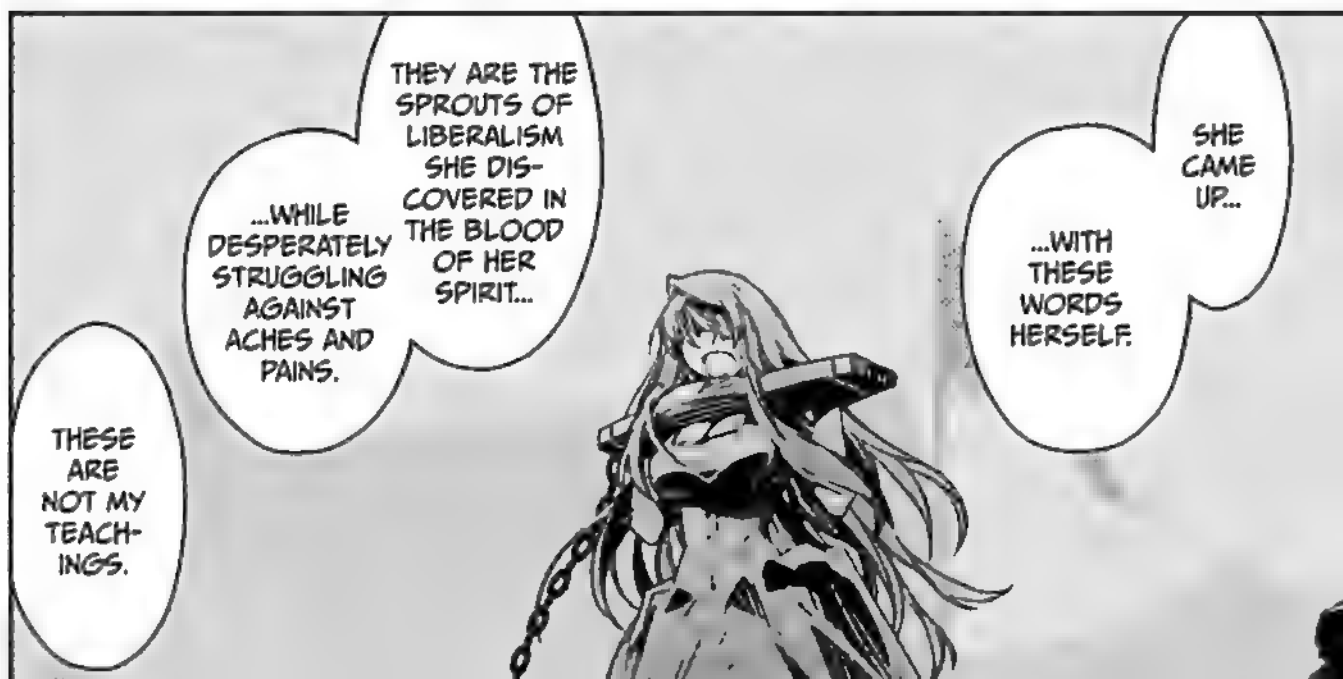


IT'S
CLEARLY
A "LUMEN
NATURALE"
STATEMENT
INCLUDING
INDEPENDENCE
OF HUMAN
NATURE...

...AND
FRATERNITY
FOR
OTHERS.

LIFE,
PROPERTY,
AND FREE-
DOM.

SHE CLAIMS
THESE THREE
THINGS ARE
NATURAL
RIGHTS.



THESE
ARE
NOT MY
TEACH-
INGS.

...WHILE
DESPERATELY
STRUGGLING
AGAINST
ACHES AND
PAINS.

THEY ARE THE
SPROUTS OF
LIBERALISM
SHE DIS-
COVERED IN
THE BLOOD
OF HER
SPIRIT...

...WITH
THESE
WORDS
HERSELF.

SHE
CAME
UP...



IT'S NOT
SOMETHING
THAT CAN
BE TAUGHT.

SHE
CLIMBED OVER
THAT WALL
THROUGH THE
BRILLIANCE
OF HER OWN
SOUL.

...THERE
ARE WALLS
KNOW-
LEDGE
CANNOT
OVER-
COME.

EVEN
IF I DID
TEACH IT
TO HER...



"I WILL
NOT
BECOME
AN INSECT
AGAIN..."

IT'S
WRITTEN
IN THIS
REPORT.

...NO
MATTER HOW
DIFFICULT IT
GETS."



IT'S
NOT
JUST
HER.

TAKE A
LOOK.

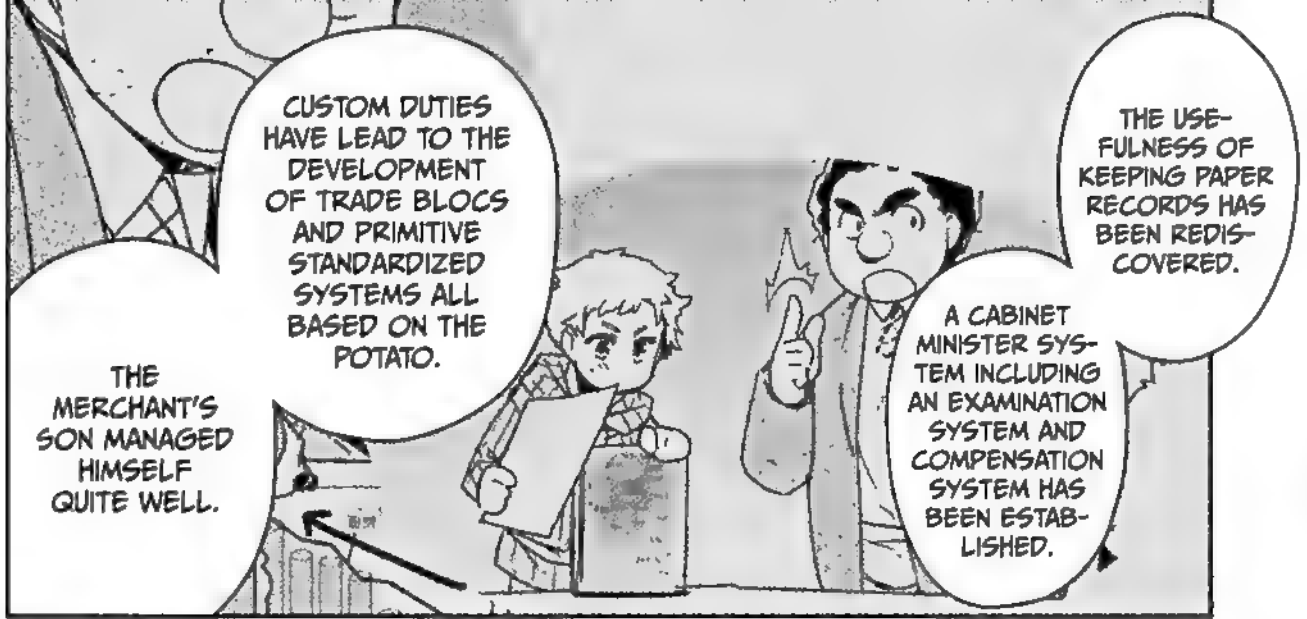
IT'S
NO
USE.

I CAN'T
PUT IT
INTO
WORDS.

I
DIDN'T...

...REALIZE I
HAD DONE
THIS MUCH
FOR HER.

I
DIDN'T...



THE
MERCHANT'S
SON MANAGED
HIMSELF
QUITE WELL.

CUSTOM DUTIES
HAVE LEAD TO THE
DEVELOPMENT
OF TRADE BLOCS
AND PRIMITIVE
STANDARDIZED
SYSTEMS ALL
BASED ON THE
POTATO.

THE USE-
FULNESS OF
KEEPING PAPER
RECORDS HAS
BEEN REDIS-
COVERED.

A CABINET
MINISTER SYS-
TEM INCLUDING
AN EXAMINATION
SYSTEM AND
COMPENSATION
SYSTEM HAS
BEEN ESTAB-
LISHED.



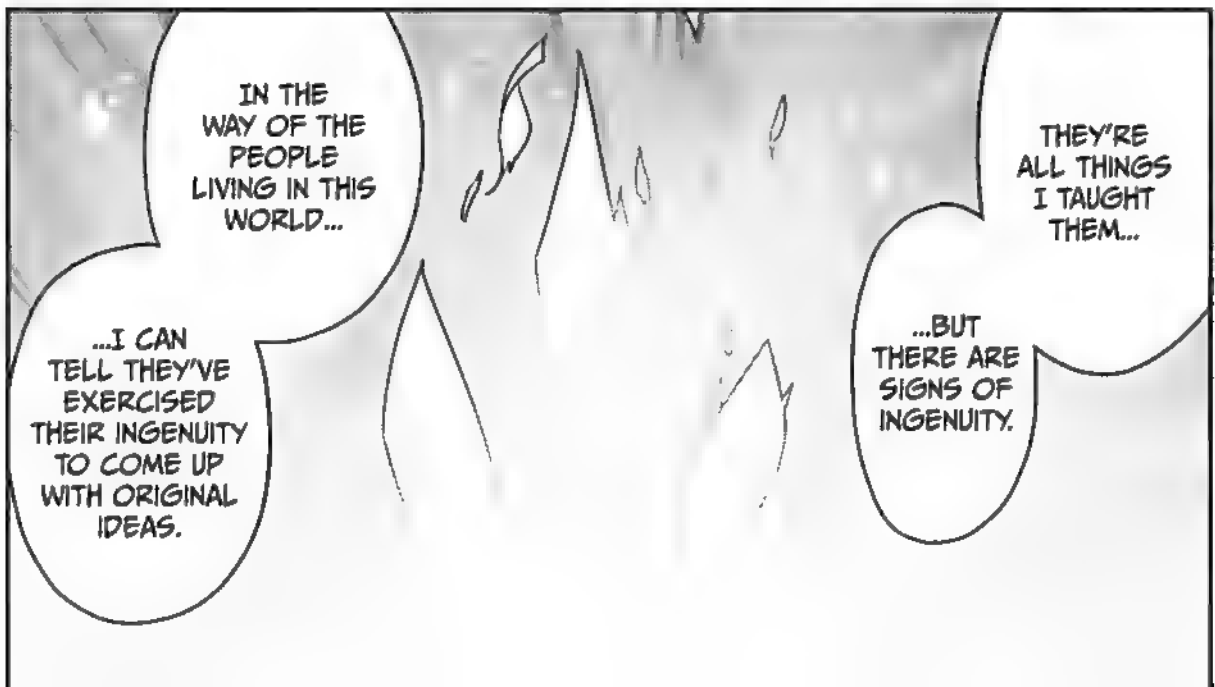
HE
TENACIOUSLY
CONTINUES
HIS WARTIME
NEGOTIA-
TIONS.

THE
NOBLE'S
SON SEEMS
TO BE
WORKING AS
A LOBBYIST
IN THE
CENTRAL
CONTINENT.



WE'VE
BEEN suc-
CESSFUL
IN WAR AS
WELL.

ESTAB-
LISHING A
POSITION ON
THE FIELD AND
USING DIAGO-
NAL FORMA-
TIONS ARE
STRATEGIES
BEYOND THIS
ERA'S WAY OF
THINKING.

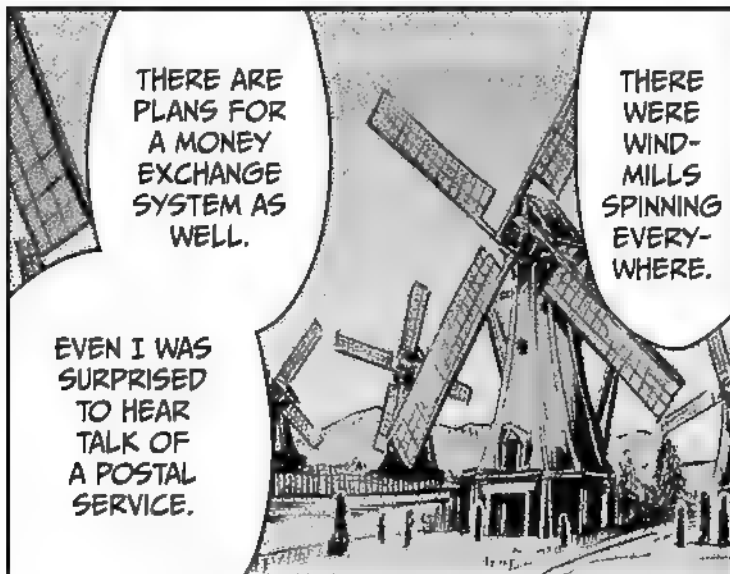


IN THE
WAY OF THE
PEOPLE
LIVING IN THIS
WORLD...

...I CAN
TELL THEY'VE
EXERCISED
THEIR INGENUITY
TO COME UP
WITH ORIGINAL
IDEAS.

THEY'RE
ALL THINGS
I TAUGHT
THEM...

...BUT
THERE ARE
SIGNS OF
INGENUITY.



THERE ARE
PLANS FOR
A MONEY
EXCHANGE
SYSTEM AS
WELL.

EVEN I WAS
SURPRISED
TO HEAR
TALK OF
A POSTAL
SERVICE.

THERE
WERE
WIND-
MILLS
SPINNING
EVERY-
WHERE.



MY
ADMINIS-
TRATIVE
POLICIES
HAD SPREAD
THROUGH-
OUT THE
WORLD.

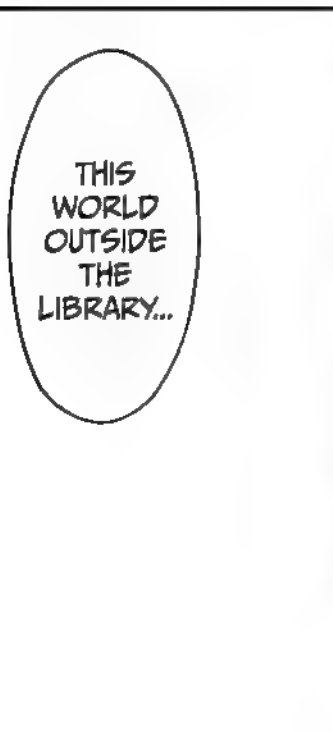
THE
DEMONS
AREN'T
FALLING
BEHIND
EITHER.



IN ORDER TO
PROTECT THEIR
INTERESTS, THE
FANGED DEMONS
AND OGRE CALL
CLAN ARE GOING
TO SIGN...

...A
SHARED
CONSTITU-
TION.

THEIR
ESTABLISH-
MENT OF
PUBLIC
WORKS AND
HOSPITALS
IS IMPRES-
SIVE AS
WELL.



THIS
WORLD
OUTSIDE
THE
LIBRARY...





DEMON
QUEEN.



THIS IS DIFFER-
ENT.



I'M
ALL
RIGHT.

THEY ARE
TEARS, BUT
I DON'T
BELIEVE I AM
CRYING.

I THINK I
AM A LITTLE
PROUD...

...EVEN
IF THEY
AREN'T MY
ACHIEVE-
MENTS.



I ADORE
HOW
TURBULENT...

...AND
CHAOTIC...



...THIS
WORLD
IS.



I ADORE
HOW
TURBULENT...

...AND
CHAOTIC...

...THIS
WORLD
IS.



I THINK I
AM A LITTLE
PROUD...

...EVEN
IF THEY
AREN'T MY
ACHIEVE-
MENTS.



SO
DO I.

I'M
GLAD
WE
MET.



...LOVE
THIS
WORLD.

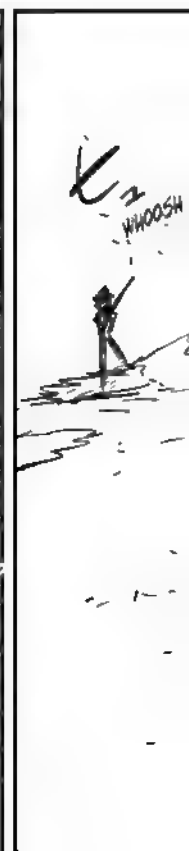
I...



HUMANS
ARE
AMAZING.

THE
WORLD IS
AMAZING.









HERO.

YEAH?



HMMM.

YOU
SHOULD
BE
CAREFUL
ABOUT
THAT.

YOU HAVE
A STRONG
DEFENSE...

...BUT YOU
ALWAYS TRY
TO STOP
LARGE AT-
TACKS WITH
WALLS OF
LIGHT.



YOU MEAN
HERO SWORD
TECHNIQUE
48?

SLASH



EARLIER,
YOUR SWORD
BLURRED
AND DISAP-
PEARED.

YOU
SUPPRESSED
THE PRESENCE
OF YOUR
SWORD TO CUT
THROUGH MY
DEFENSES.



I
GUESS
THAT'S
TRUE.

YOU
DON'T
KNOW
UNTIL
YOU TRY.

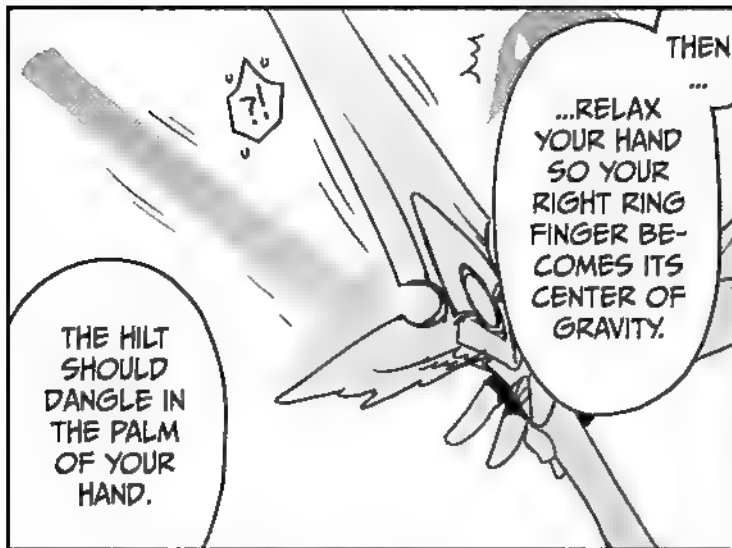


I DON'T
THINK IT'S
POSSIBLE.

IT'S A
HERO'S
SWORD
TECH-
NIQUE.

WILL
YOU
TEACH
ME?

I WISH
TO
LEARN
THAT
TECH-
NIQUE.





IT HAS
BEEN PRAISED
IN MANY OLD
TEXTS AS
A TYPE OF
HOLIDAY.

DURING THE
AGE OF THE
GODS, THERE
WERE EVEN
SPECIALIZED
OFFICIALS
AND DEPART-
MENTS WITHIN
GUILDS.

A
PLEASURE
TRIP...

...IS THE
GREATEST
REWARD A
HARDWORKING
MAID CAN
RECEIVE.

I SEE.
NOW
THAT YOU
MENTION
IT, YOU'RE
EXACTLY
RIGHT.

THE MAID
SISTERS HAVEN'T
HAD A VACATION,
EITHER

IN OTHER
WORDS,
IT'S A VA-
CATION.

NORMALLY
BUSY
MAIDS ARE
RELEASED...

...TO
WASH
AWAY
THEIR
FATIGUE
...

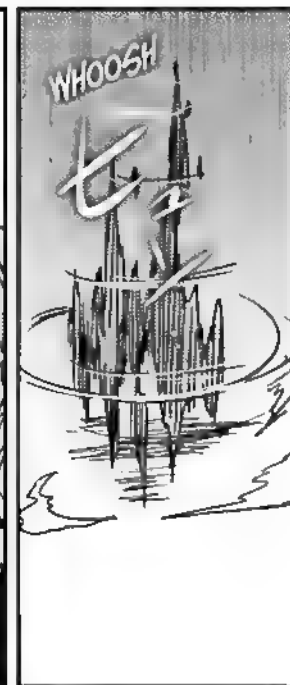
THANK
YOU.

VERY
WELL!
I'LL
ALLOW
IT!

I WILL
LEAVE
THIS
MATTER
UP TO
YOU,
CHIEF
MAID!

...AND
REACH A
NEW AND
HIGHER
LEVEL OF
BEING
A MAID.







THE ACTIONS OF LOBBYISTS

In contrast with systems such as the government, lobbyists work privately. While most people in Japan aren't familiar with them, their influence is undeniable.

LOBBYING AND LOBBYISTS

In the world, there is an activity known as "lobbying." This term refers to private political activity conducted by individuals or groups with the aim of having their opinions reflected in political policy. In practice, this involves negotiating with politicians and government agencies through appeals, contributions, and applying pressure. Those who actually conduct these activities are referred to as "lobbyists."

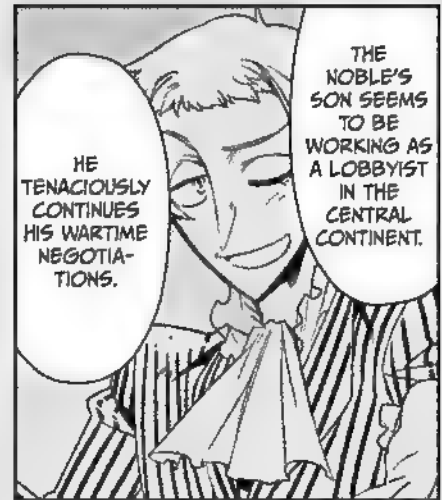
Lobbyists are often employed by corporations and interest groups to realize benefits for their employer. Because they are not politicians, their restrictions are few, making them useful spokespeople for the people. However, they are prone to corruption related to political contributions, and because lobbyists sometimes reflect only the voices of a few of their supporters, some countries place legal limitations on lobbyists.

In modern day Japan, lobbying is perceived as a form of collusive relationship between the government and the people, and most people aren't familiar with them. However, recently companies specializing in lobbying have formed, and the practice is gradually beginning to spread.

SOMETIMES LOBBYISTS HOLD THE KEY TO DIPLOMACY



The Noble's Son lobbying in the Central Continent gives the information he discovers to the Blizzard Queen and also works to increase their number of allies.



The Noble's Son is working with various important figures in the Central Continent. This is known as "lobbying."

Lobbying is not an activity that happens only between a country and its citizens. It also occurs on the international stage. One example is diplomats residing in a foreign country lobbying to secure the interests of their home country.

In this work, the Noble's Son is a lobbyist. He travels between the courts of various countries and makes contact with important figures and gives the information he discovers to the Three Kingdom Alliance. He also pitches the positives of the Three Kingdom Alliance to those who are dissatisfied with the state of the Central Continent.

Currently, it is clear the Central Continent's forces are greater than the Three Kingdom Alliance's of the south. Trying to recruit members to the alliance would result in rejection and put people on guard. However, pointing out the merits of the Three Kingdom Alliance is different, and it is even possible to gradually pull nations away from the Central Continent. Additionally, even if a nation only reaches a neutral position, the power of the enemy nation decreases, helping the Three Kingdom Alliance. Though it is not glamorous, this is a proper method of diplomacy. Lobbying is another way to fight.

FLAG



MAOYU

Archenemy and Hero

CHAPTER 25

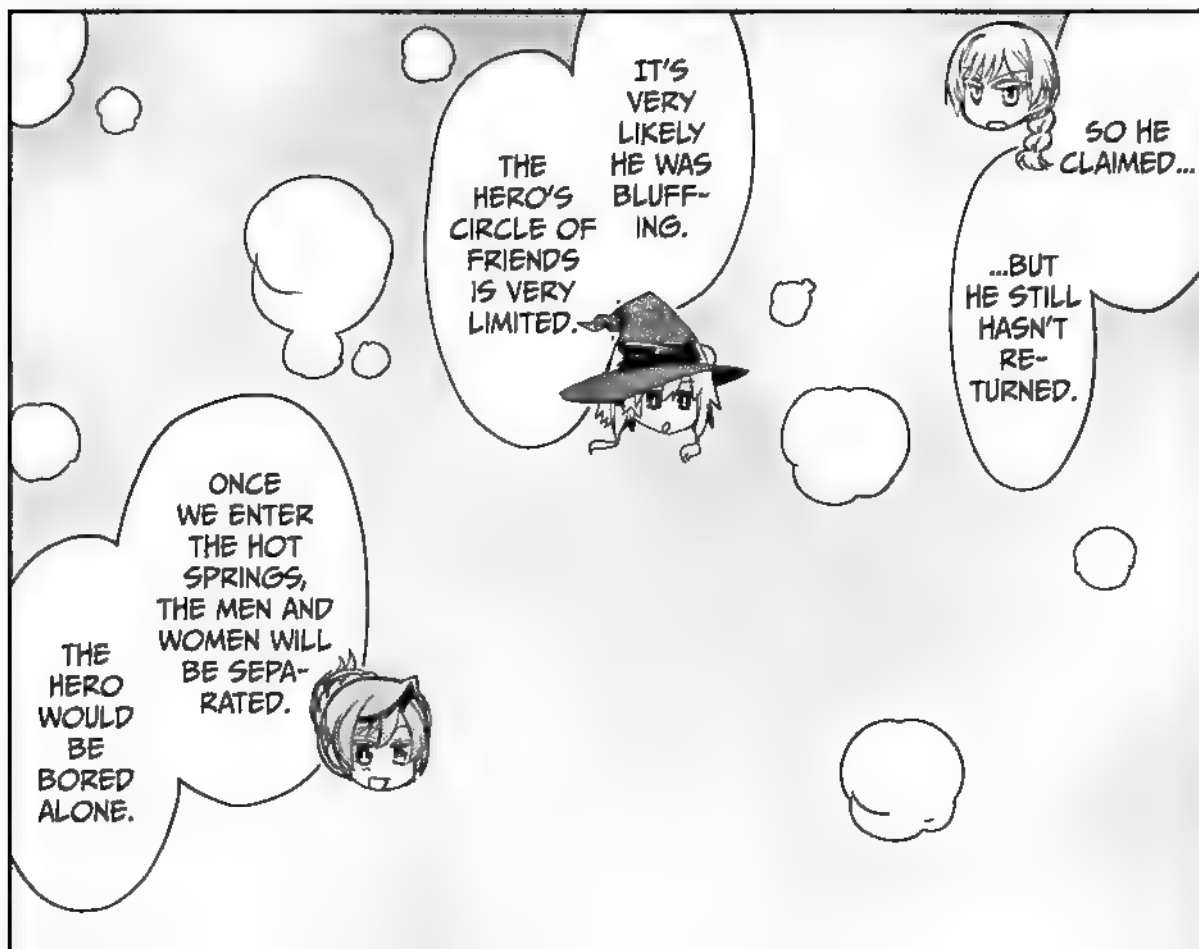






CHAPTER 25 Archenemy and Hero

Time Demands It





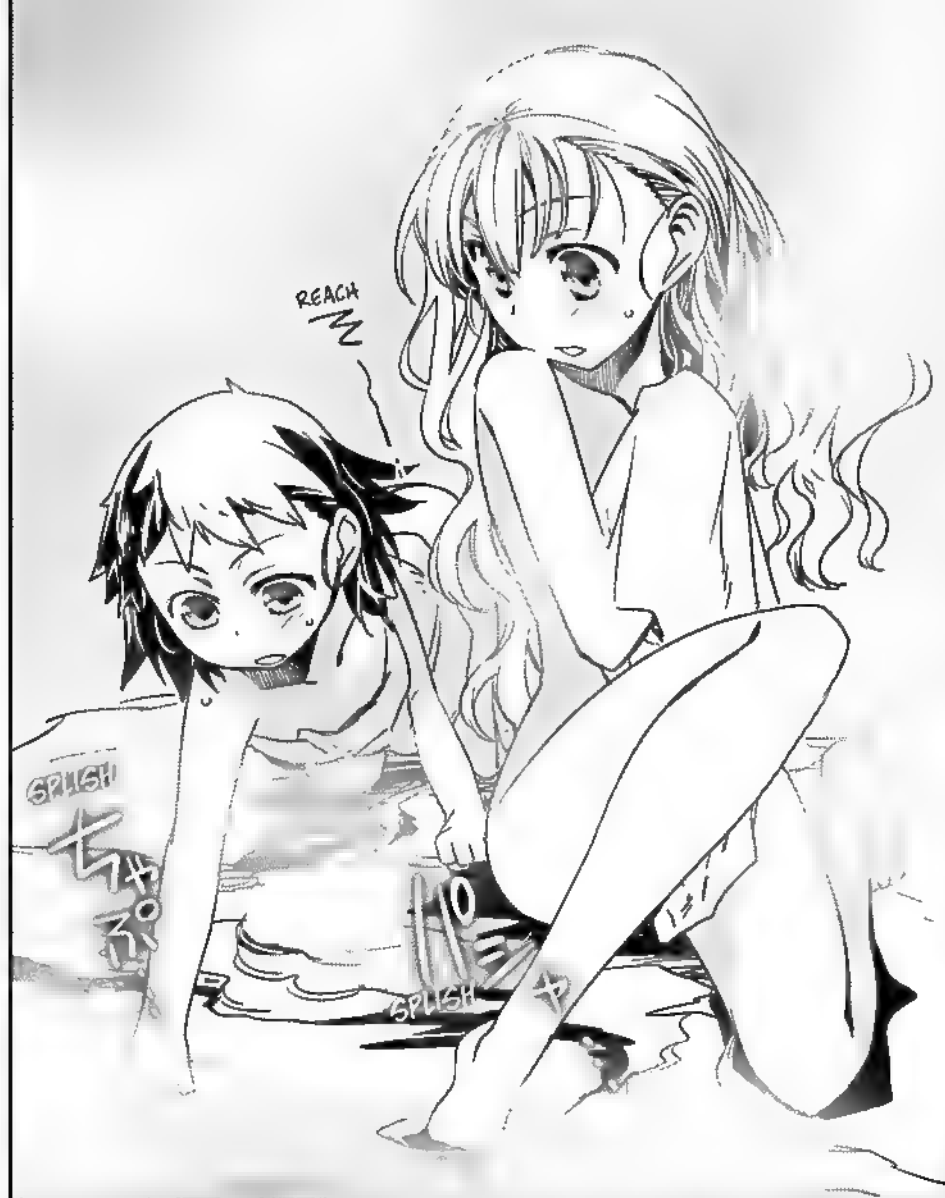


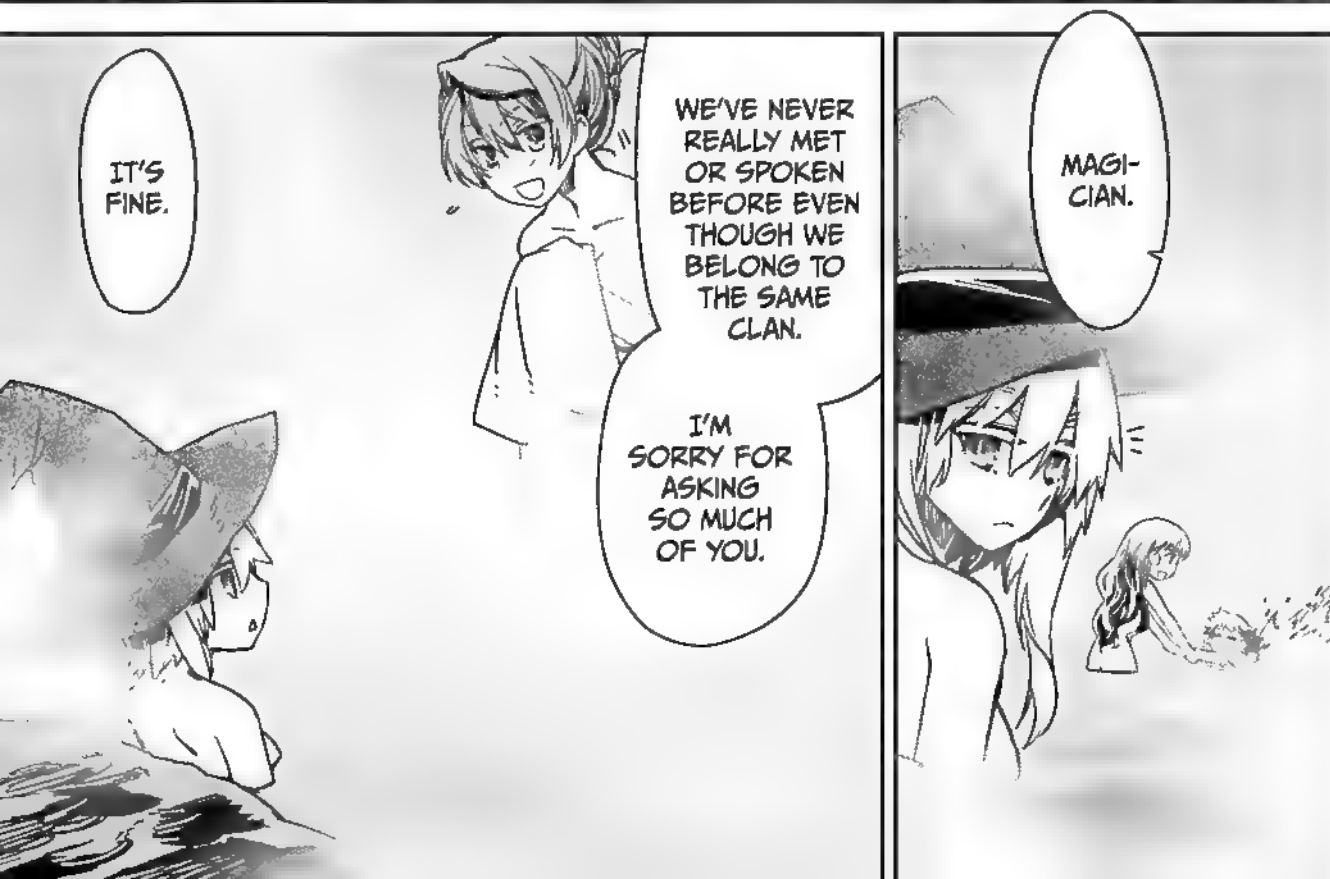
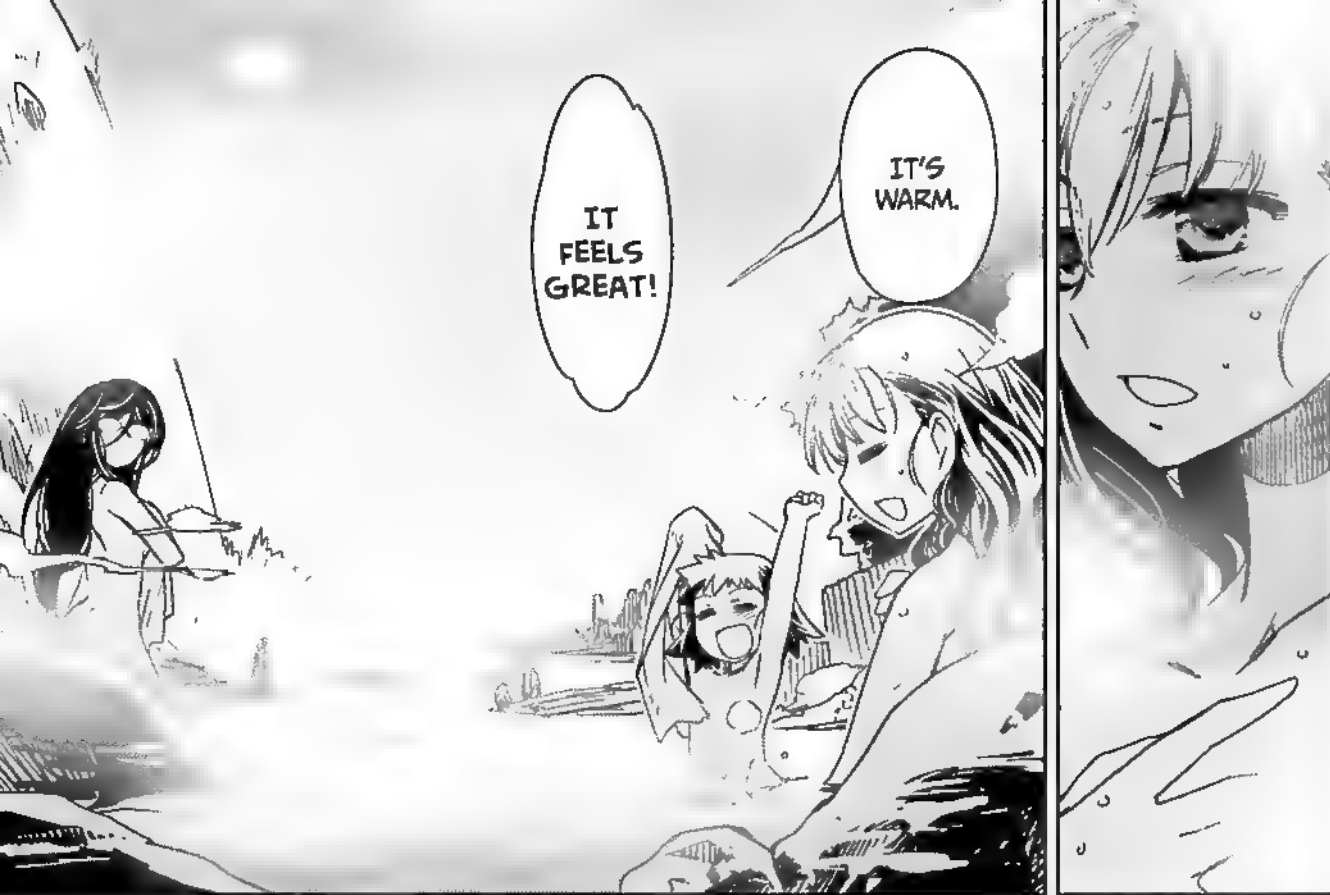
OH, RIGHT.

WILL THE FOREST NEAR THE MANSION DISAPPEAR ?

IT MUST TAKE AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT OF FIREWOOD TO HEAT ALL THIS WATER.

GLOOM







...IS IM-
PORTANT
TO ME.

THE
HERO...



DO YOU
LIKE HIM,
DEMON
QUEEN OF
THE HUMAN
WORLD?



THE
HERO
OF THE
SPIRIT
WORLD.

WHAT
?



IT'S
BECAUSE
HE'S
STUPID.



...FIVE YEARS
SOONER THAN
I EXPECTED
HIM TO COME.

I THOUGHT
HE WOULD
ARRIVE AS
A KING OF
THE HUMAN
WORLD.

WHY
DIDN'T
THE HERO
BECOME
A KING?

HE CAME
TO THE
SPIRIT
WORLD...



...I WOULD
TRAVEL
ABOVE
GROUND TO
CONQUER
THE HERO.

AS THE
LONE HERO
CARRYING THE
ASPIRATIONS
OF THE
DEMONS ON
HER BACK...

...AND
INVADE
THE
SUBTER-
RANEAN
WORLD.

THE HERO
WOULD
BECOME A
KING RULING
THE WORLD
ABOVE
GROUND...



YOU
PROB-
ABLY...

...WOULDN'T
HAVE GONE
ON THAT
JOURNEY.



I
WONDER
IF THAT
COULD
HAVE
BEEN OUR
STORY.



IS THERE
SOMETHING
BOTHERING
YOU?



STARE



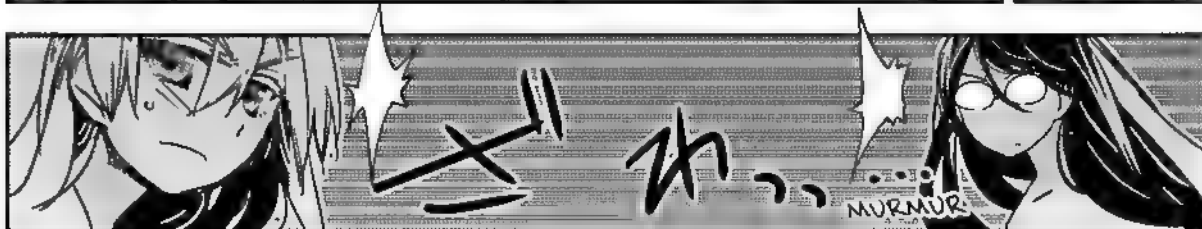
?



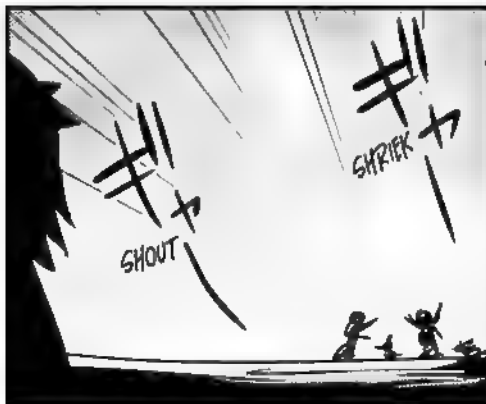
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

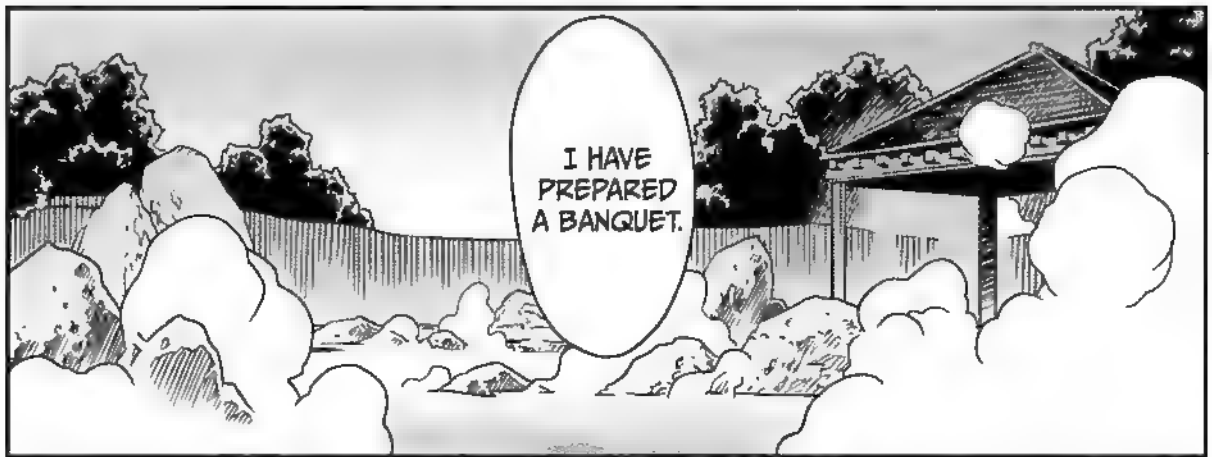
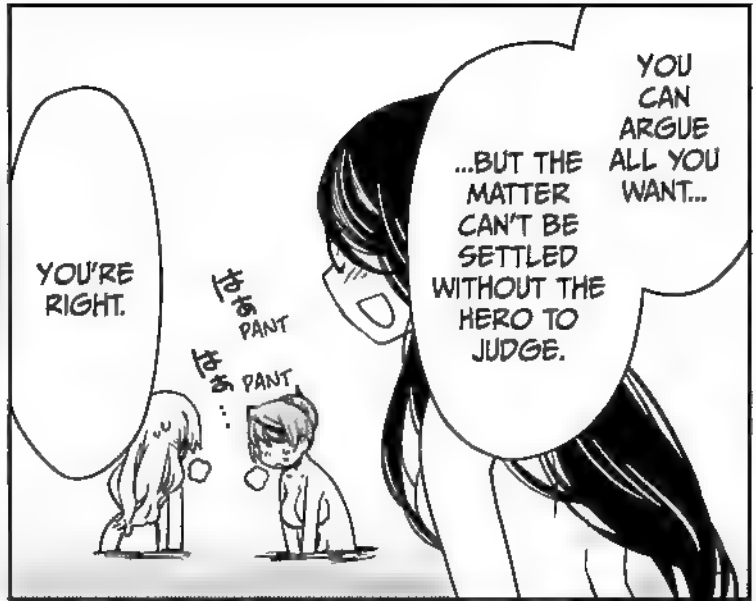
I KNOW
NOTHING
ABOUT
FIGHTING.

SPLASH















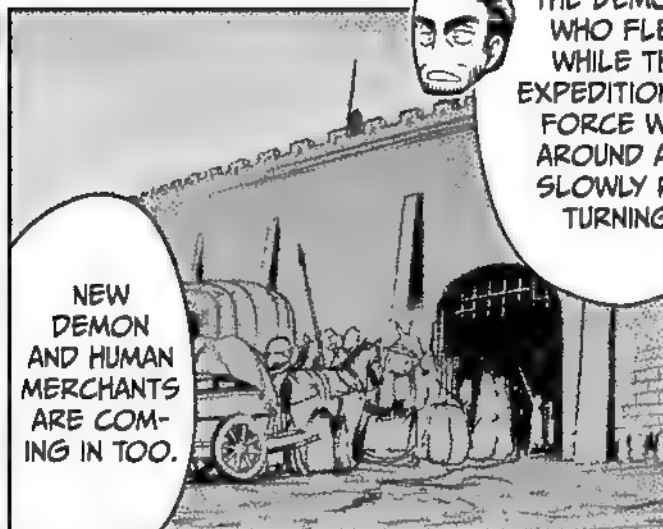






HUMANS?

I THOUGHT
THE GATE
WAS DE-
STROYED
AND A GIANT
HOLE WAS
LEFT IN THE
GROUND.



NEW
DEMON
AND HUMAN
MERCHANTS
ARE COM-
ING IN TOO.

THE DEMONS
WHO FLED
WHILE THE
EXPEDITIONARY
FORCE WAS
AROUND ARE
SLOWLY RE-
TURNING.



OF COURSE,
IF THEY'RE
DISCOVERED,
THEY'RE
GUILTY OF
SMUGGLING.

...THEY'LL
GO ANY-
WHERE
THERE'S AN
OPPORTU-
NITY FOR
BUSINESS.

MERCHANTS
ARE
ROBUST.

WITH OR
WITHOUT
PERMIS-
SION...



WHAT?

ANYWAY,
THOUGH...

HE'S
THE
HERO,
HUH?



NOT
BAD.

THEY'RE
WILL-
ING TO
BECOME
SMUG-
GLERS?



DOES THAT
MEAN YOU AND
THE DEMONS...

WE
DON'T
WANT TO
FIGHT.



...I ALWAYS
WONDERED HOW
SOMEONE SO
IRRESPONSIBLE
BECAME SO
POWERFUL.

I CAN
UNDER-
STAND IT
NOW THAT
I KNOW
HE'S THE
HERO.

WELL...

EVERY
TIME THE
BLACK
KNIGHT
DRANK...



I
SEE.

HE'D SAY,
"ANY HUMANS
WHO HATE
DEMONS CAN
COME TO ME.
I'LL BE YOUR
PUNCHING BAG
INSTEAD."

ANY
DEMONS
WHO HATE
HUMANS CAN
COME TO ME.
YOU CAN HATE
ME INSTEAD."

RIGHT.

THE HERO
WAS ALWAYS
INSISTENT ON
THAT POINT.





THOUGH
EVERYONE
WANTS TO
LIVE IN PEACE,
THEY'RE ALL
TAKING UP
SWORDS.



THE CENTRAL
CONTINENT
REFUSES TO
PARDON THE
DEMONS, AND
THEY CONTINUE
TO OPPOSE THE
THREE KINGDOM
ALLIANCE.

THE
SURFACE
WORLD IS
A MESS
TOO.



MAYBE IT'S
JUST BECAUSE
I LIVE IN THAT
TUMULTUOUS
CITY...

...BUT
YOU'D BE
AN IDIOT
NOT TO
HAVE A
SWORD.

WELL, IT
CAN'T BE
HELPED.



YOU'RE
RIGHT.

REVEALING
YOUR DE-
FENSELESS
SIDES TO HIM
ISN'T VIRTU-
OUS. IT'S
STUPID.

YOU DON'T
KNOW WHAT
THE PERSON
STANDING
BEFORE YOU
IS THINKING.



IF SOMEONE
IMPORTANT
CAME IN AND
TOOK AWAY
EVERYONE'S
WEAPONS...

...IT MAY
BRING
ABOUT
PEACE.

BUT...

...WE
CAN'T JUST
CONFISCATE
ALL THE
WEAPONS.

THAT'S
ONLY A
TEMPO-
RARY
SOLU-
TION.



TRUE
PEACE IS
WHEN YOU
CAN SHAKE
HANDS WHILE
HOLDING
YOUR
WEAPONS.

YOU CAN'T
REALLY CALL
THAT PEACE,
CAN YOU?

BUT
THAT...

...WOULD BE
LIKE CHILDREN
WHO STOP
FIGHTING
BECAUSE THEIR
DAD AND MOM
WHACKED THEM.



CAN
IT BE
DONE?



SORRY.

I SAID
SOME IMPER-
TINENT
THINGS.



IS IT
TRUE?

REALLY
?



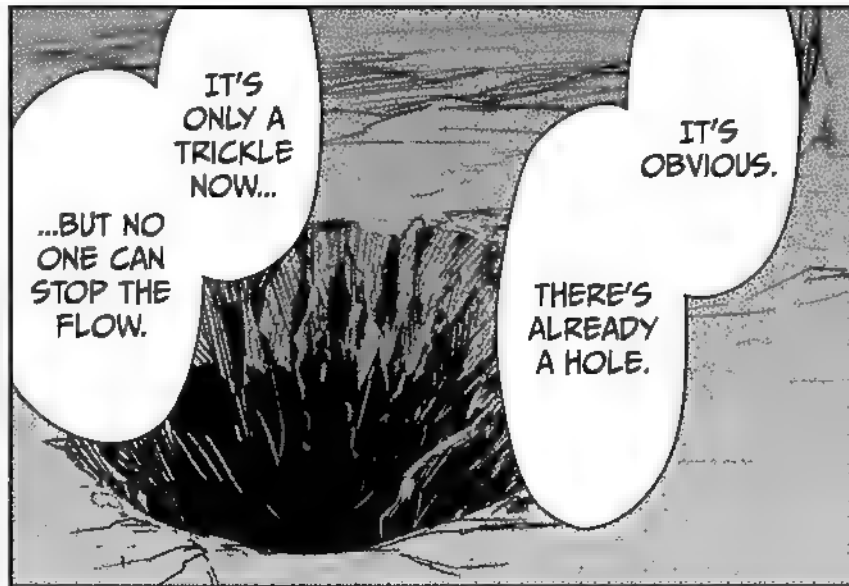
COEXIST
WITH
DEMONS?

WE
CAN DO
THAT.



IF WE
CAN'T
COEXIST,
WE'LL
DESTROY
EACH
OTHER.

WE
HAVE TO
COEXIST.



IT'S
ONLY A
TRICKLE
NOW...

...BUT NO
ONE CAN
STOP THE
FLOW.

IT'S
OBVIOUS.

THERE'S
ALREADY
A HOLE.



THAT'S
RIGHT.

WHAT
?

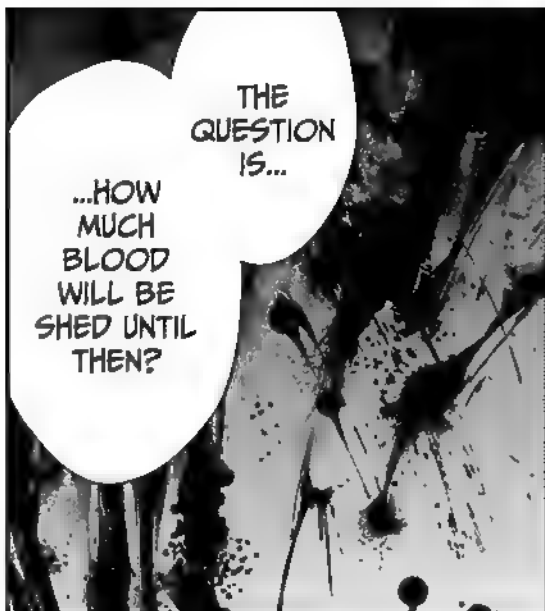


THE
QUESTION
IS HOW
MUCH DAM-
AGE WE
CAN TAKE.



YOU'LL
REALIZE
THAT IMMEDI-
ATELY ONCE
YOU SEE
GATEWAY
CITY.

WE CAN
COEXIST.



THE
QUESTION
IS...

...HOW
MUCH
BLOOD
WILL BE
SHED UNTIL
THEN?



WE WILL
COEXIST
EVENTU-
ALLY.

I CAN
GUARAN-
TEE THAT.



...WE DON'T
KNOW WHETHER
IT'LL HAPPEN IN
FIVE YEARS, 10
YEARS...

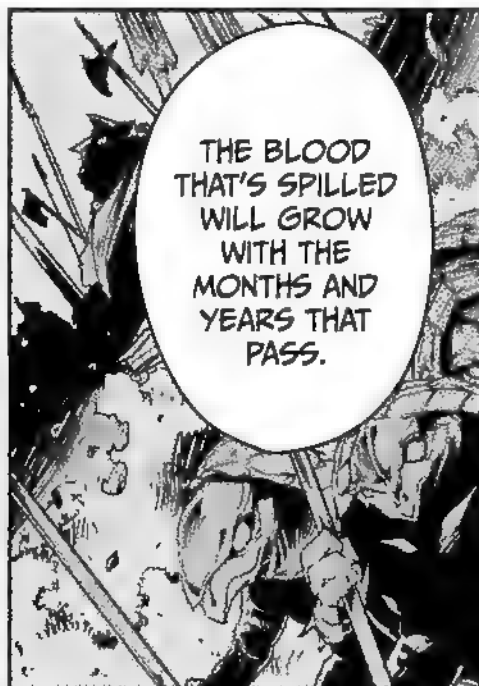
...OR 100
YEARS
FROM
NOW.

THOUGH
WE'LL
ACHIEVE
COEX-
ISTENCE
EVENTU-
ALLY...



...EITHER
HUMANS OR
DEMONS WILL
HAVE TO SHED
ALL THE BLOOD
THEY HAVE
TO GIVE.

IT'S
POSSIBLE
THAT...



THE BLOOD
THAT'S SPILLED
WILL GROW
WITH THE
MONTHS AND
YEARS THAT
PASS.



TIME
DEMANDS
IT.

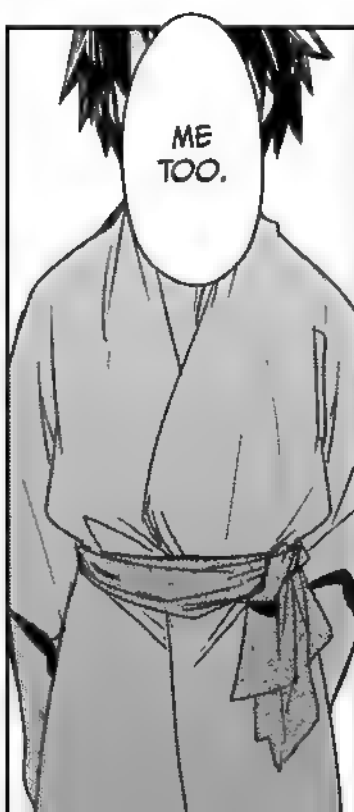
I CAN
HEAR THE
VOICES
DEMAND-
ING IT.



...HUMANS AND
DEMONS CAN
LAST UNTIL WE
CAN COEXIST
IS ANOTHER
PROBLEM.

IT MEANS
WHETHER
OR NOT...

TOMORROW
WILL COME,
BUT WE
DON'T KNOW
HOW MUCH
BLOOD WILL
BE SPILLED
TODAY.



ME
TOO.



I'M
STAYING
IN THIS
ROOM
TOO.



I'M
STAYING
IN THIS
ROOM.









YES.

DID
THE HERO
DESTROY
THIS
DOOR?



HAVE THEY
VANISHED?

I
DON'T
KNOW.



THEY WILL
CHAOTICALLY
TAKE OVER THE
ENTIRE WORLD.



OR
ELSE?



THE BAR-
RIER KEEPING
THEIR RESIDU-
AL THOUGHTS
TOGETHER
HAS BEEN
DESTROYED.

I DOUBT
THEY'LL BE
ABLE TO
TAKE OVER
HER AGAIN.

OR
ELSE...



THEY'VE
BEEN
RELEASED
INTO THE
WORLD.



SO THE
DEMON
MONARCH'S
SPIRITS...









I'LL
START
WITH A
DRINK.

COME
ON.



IT TASTES
BETTER
IN THE
MORNING.

YOU'RE
DRINKING
IN THE
MORN-
ING?

YOU
HAVE A
POINT.



WHICH
ONE
ARE YOU
SERIOUS
ABOUT?

WHAT?



SO...

...WHO
IS IT?

HUH?



IS
THIS THE
TRUE AND
IMMORAL
STORY OF
A SUDDEN
BATTLE TO
BE YOUR
NUMBER
ONE GIRL?



FASCI-
NATING.



DON'T
HIDE
IT.

IT'S
NOT
LIKE
THAT.

I'M
NOT...





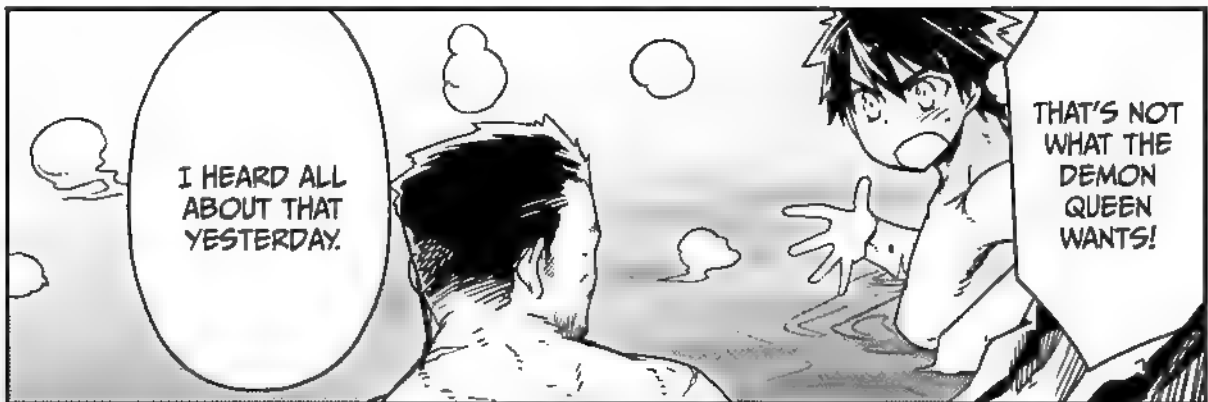
RUMOR IS
THEY'LL BE
DETERMINING
THE SIZE OF
THE EXPEDITION
THEY SEND
INTO THE HUMAN
WORLD.

THAT
WON'T BE
POSSIBLE
AT THIS
KURULTAI.



IF POSSIBLE,
I'D LIKE TO USE
THE MEETING
TO FIND A WAY
TO COEXIST
WITH HUMANS...

...BUT
I DON'T
KNOW HOW
IT'LL TURN
OUT.



I HEARD ALL
ABOUT THAT
YESTERDAY.

THAT'S NOT
WHAT THE
DEMON
QUEEN
WANTS!



...BUT IF
THERE ARE
RUMORS ABOUT
IT, THEN IT
MEANS THERE'S
SOMEONE WHO
DOES WANT TO
START A WAR.

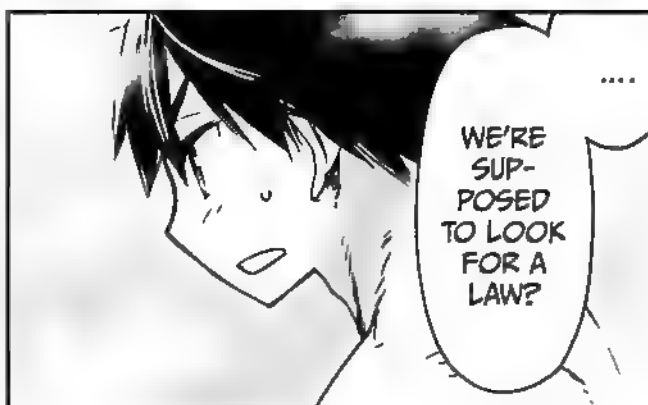
I DON'T
THINK
EVERYONE
WANTS
WAR...

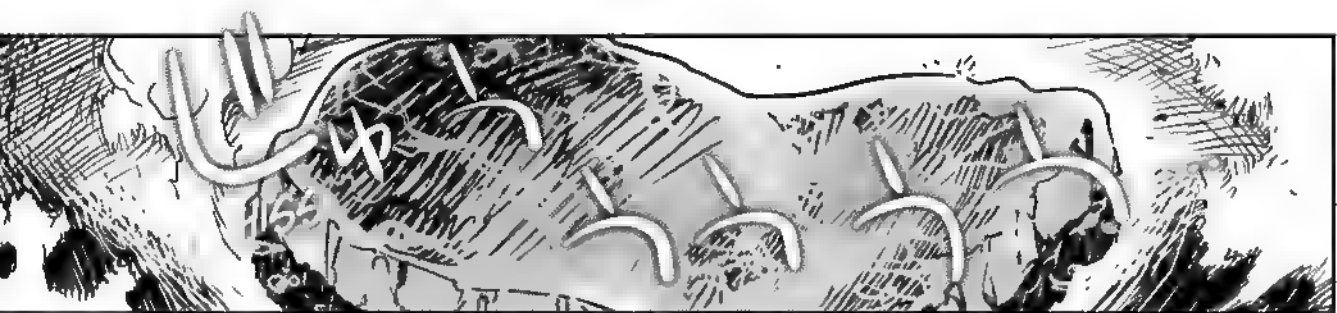
...IT MEANS
THEY'RE
ALREADY
LEANING
THAT WAY.

IF THEY'RE
ALREADY
TALKING
ABOUT HOW
FAR THEY'LL
GO...

ON TOP
OF THAT,
THERE ARE
THE EIGHT
MAJOR
CLANS.









OH.



THE
SPIRIT
WORLD
?



YOU'RE
RIGHT.

...THE
SPIRIT
WORLD IS
PRETTY
FERTILE
COMPARED
TO THE
SURFACE.

YOU
KNOW
...



THAT'S
RIGHT.

DO YOU
MEAN THAT
SPIRIT
WORLD?

SHE
ADMITTED
IT?!



LEAVE
IT TO
ME.

WAS
I NOT
SUPPOSED
TO TELL
HER?

DO YOUR
BEST TO
FOOL
THEM.

WE
HADN'T
TOLD
HER YET.



THIS IS
HEAD-
ING IN
A WEIRD
DIREC-
TION

I THOUGHT
OUR MIS-
TRESS WAS
A MEMBER
OF NOBIL-
ITY.

I NEVER
IMAGINED
SHE OWNED
A PLACE
LIKE THIS.

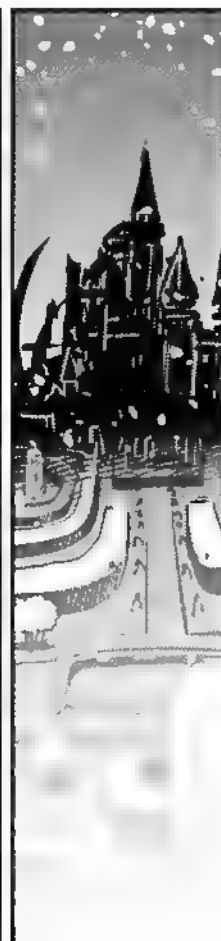
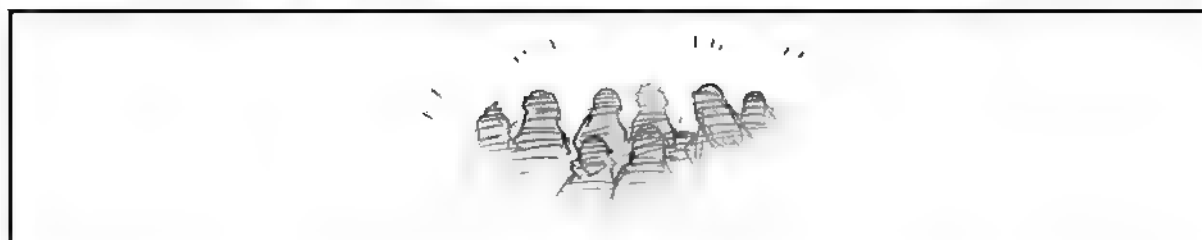


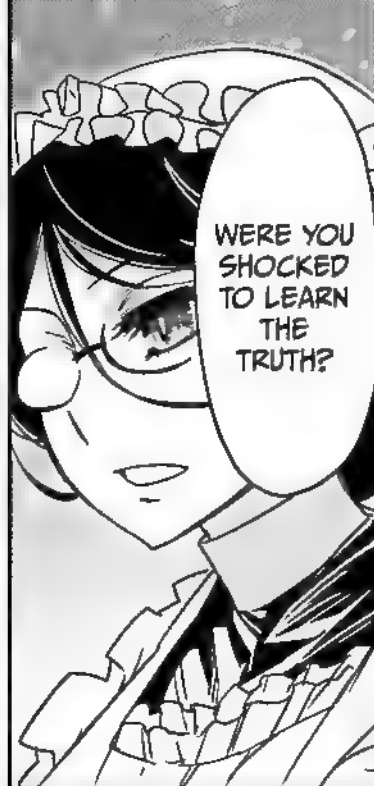
OUR
MIS-
TRESS
?

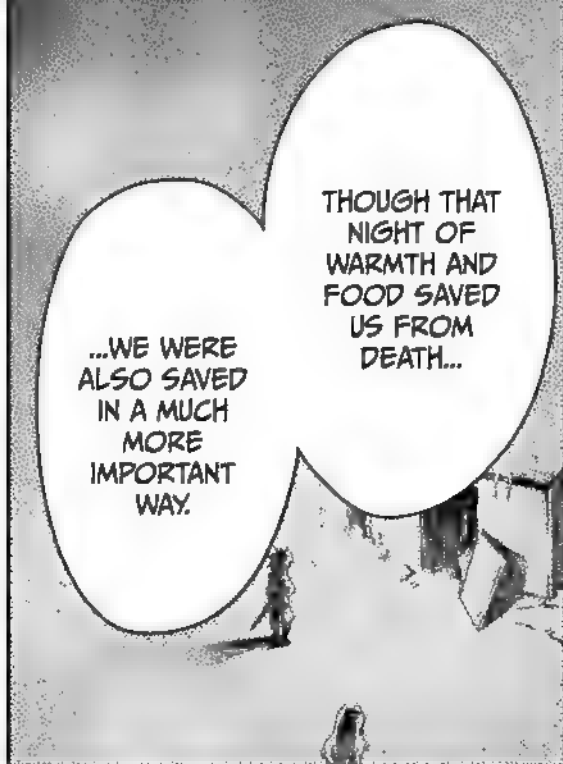
THIS IS
THE HIGH-
EST CLASS
RESORT IN
THE SPIRIT
WORLD.

YOUR
MISTRESS
OVER THERE
OWNS THIS
RESORT.









...WE WERE
ALSO SAVED
IN A MUCH
MORE
IMPORTANT
WAY.

THOUGH THAT
NIGHT OF
WARMTH AND
FOOD SAVED
US FROM
DEATH...



...IT DOESN'T
CHANGE THE
FACT YOU
SAVED US.

...OR YOU
AND THE
HERO ARE
DEMONS...

EVEN
IF MY
MISTRESS
IS A
DEMON
...



...I
SUPPOSE
I AM
SHOCKED
IN ANOTHER
WAY.

BUT...



THAT WAS
WHAT I
THOUGHT.

WAR WAS
TERRIFYING,
INSANE, AND
SOMETHING
WE MUST
NEVER DO.

I SIMPLY
FEARED IT.

I NEVER
KNEW MUCH
ABOUT WAR
BEFORE.



NO.

I SIMPLY
BELIEVED
IT TO BE
SO WITH-
OUT GIVING
IT MUCH
THOUGHT.

BUT
BECAUSE
DEMONS
ARE DE-
MONS...
...I
THOUGHT...



...I ALSO
BELIEVED...

...WAR
AGAINST
DEMONS
WASN'T
REALLY
WAR.

THOUGH I
BELIEVED...

...WE
MUST
NEVER
WAGE
WAR...



DEMONS
ARE NOT
NECES-
SARILY
GOOD,
EITHER.

I
BELIEVED
IT WAS
BECAUSE
DEMONS
WERE
EVIL...

...EVEN
THOUGH IT
IMMEDIATELY
BECOMES
APPARENT
WITH A LITTLE
THOUGHT
THAT IT'S NOT
BLACK AND
WHITE.

I WAS
SHOCKED
TO LEARN...

...THERE
WAS THAT
SIDE TO
ME.

SQUEEZE



...WHAT IS WAR?

I ONCE ASKED THE MISTRESS...



I KNOW MY MISTRESS AND YOU, CHIEF MAID.

BUT THEY'RE NOT EVIL.

I KNOW THAT.



SHE TOLD ME THAT...

...VERY MOURNFULLY.

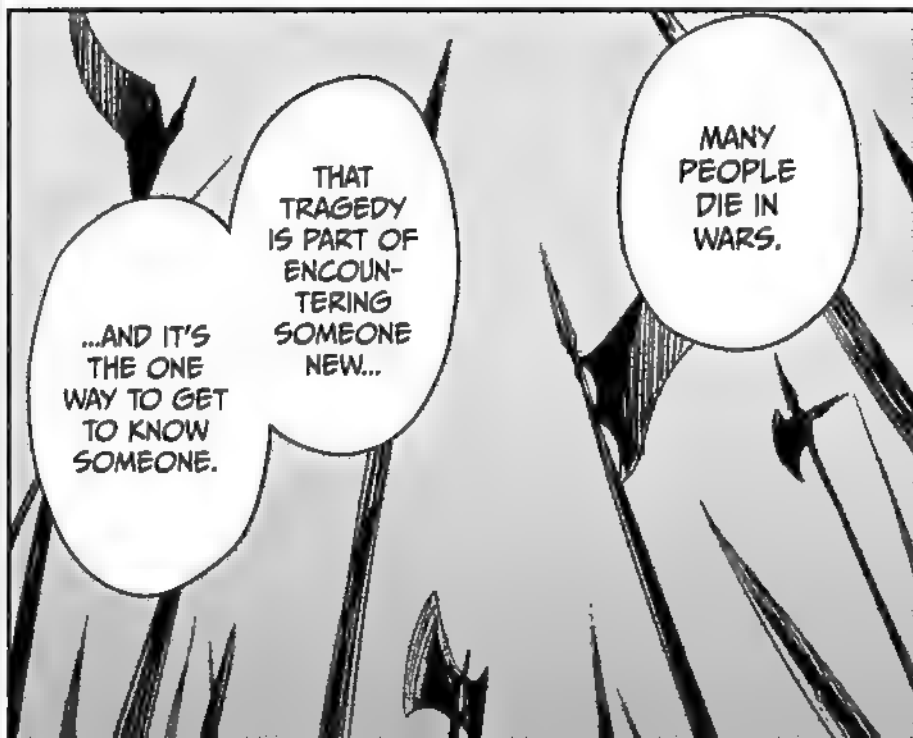


SHE SAID ESSENTIALLY, BECOMING FRIENDS, FIGHTING, AND GOING TO WAR...

...ARE THE SAME THING.

SHE TOLD ME WHEN TWO DISTINCT ENTITIES MEET...

...ONE OF THE THINGS THAT OCCURS BETWEEN THEM IS CONFLICT.



THAT TRAGEDY IS PART OF ENCOUNTERING SOMEONE NEW...

...AND IT'S THE ONE WAY TO GET TO KNOW SOMEONE.

MANY PEOPLE DIE IN WARS.

I ARROGANTLY
BELIEVED THERE
WAS NO WAY
SOMETHING SO
PAINFUL...

...RESENT
THE SPIRITS
JUST A
LITTLE.

I
DID...

AT
THE TIME,
I DIDN'T
UNDERSTAND
AT ALL.

...COULD
BE PART OF
ENCOUNTER-
ING SOME-
ONE NEW.



HONESTLY
SPEAKING, I
STILL DON'T
UNDERSTAND...

...HOW SHE
FELT WHEN
SHE MADE
THAT EX-
PRESSION.



I HAD
NO IDEA
WHAT...

...THE
MISTRESS
MEANT WHEN
SHE SAID
"ENCOUNTER."



BUT I
BELIEVE
I MUST
UNDER-
STAND...

...FOR
MY OWN
SAKE.





THEIR
RELATION-
SHIPS AND
EXISTENCES
TAKE ON ALL
KINDS OF
FORMS.

...BUT
ALSO
WARM,
TRANQUIL,
AND BEAU-
TIFUL.

THEY ARE
CRUEL,
FOUL, AND
HIDEOUSLY
TWISTED...

THE
WORLD
IS LARGE
AND END-
LESS.
OUT THERE,
THERE ARE
COUNTLESS
INDIVIDUALS
WITH SOULS.



BUT YOU
ALREADY
HAVE
WINGS.

SOMEDAY
YOU WILL
LOOK AT
THEM AND
UNDER-
STAND.

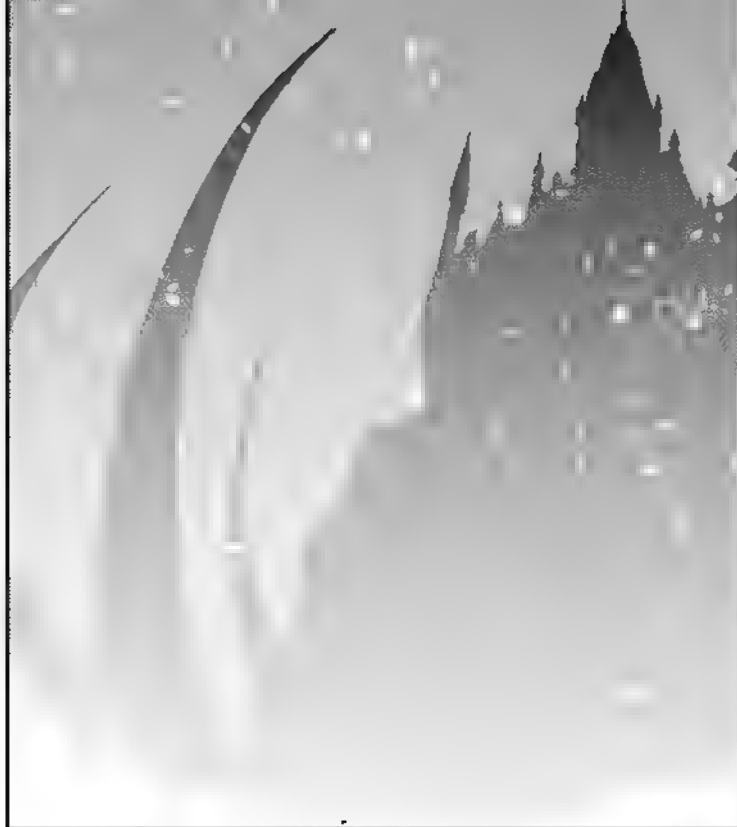
AS
LONG
AS YOU
DON'T
GIVE
UP, I'M
SURE...

...YOU
WILL.

THIS WORLD
CARRIES ALL
OF THEM...

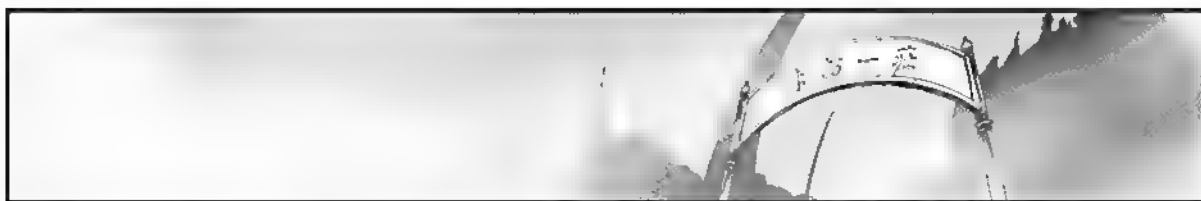
...AND
IS
VAST.





YES...

...
TEACHER.



WE'RE
BRING-
ING BACK
LOTS OF
SOUVIN-
ERS.

WE'RE ALL
PACKED AS
WELL.

WE
DIDN'T
BRING
MUCH.

ALL
RIGHT.
WE'VE
PACKED
OUR
THINGS.





GOT IT.

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, HERO.



BACK TO OVER-WINTER VILLAGE.

NOW, THEN, WE SHOULD GO TOO.



WE HAVE MOUNTAINS OF WORK WAITING FOR US WHEN WE GET HOME.

WAAAAH



IF I STAY IN THE HOT SPRINGS ANY LONGER ...

...I MIGHT START ABANDONING EVERYTHING.

HEW ...



WE NEED TO START GATHERING INFORMATION WE CAN USE IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE LONELY WINTER KING AND CENTRAL CONTINENT TOO.



YOU'RE RIGHT.

THE KURULTAI BEGINS WITH THE START OF THE NEXT MONTH.

WE'LL HAVE TO RETURN BEFORE LONG.



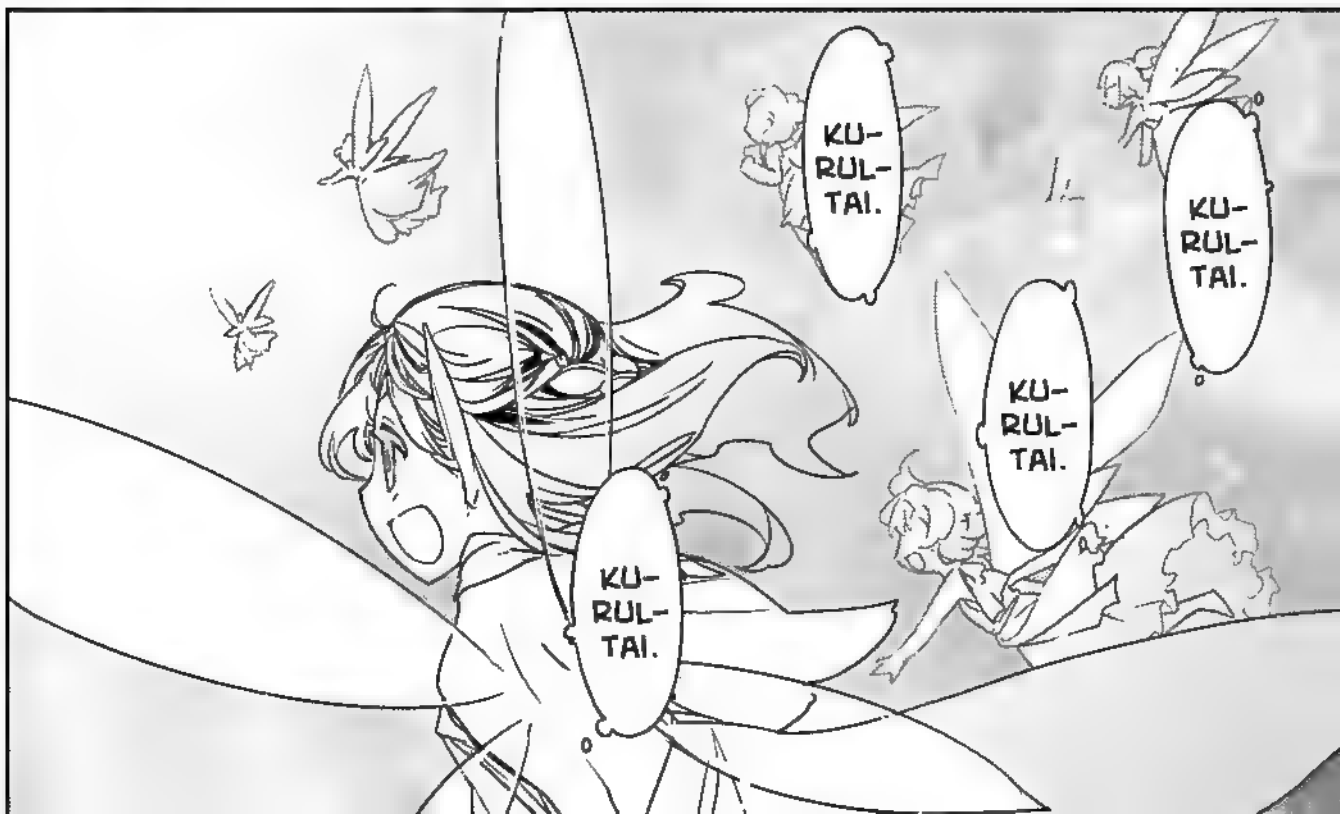
THE
DEMON
CLANS
AND
CHIEFS...

...ARE ON
THEIR WAY
TO THE
KURULTAI.

WE MUST
HURRY.



THE HUMANOID
DEMON CLAN
THE PATTERNED
CHIEF









HMPH.

I HAVE NO
REASON TO
OBEY SUCH
A SPINE-
LESS DEMON
QUEEN.

THE FANGED
DEMON CLAN
DUKE SILVER
TIGER



I WON-
DER...

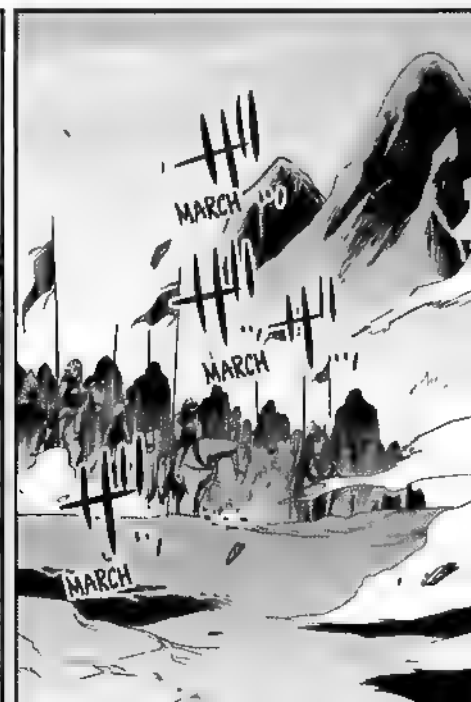
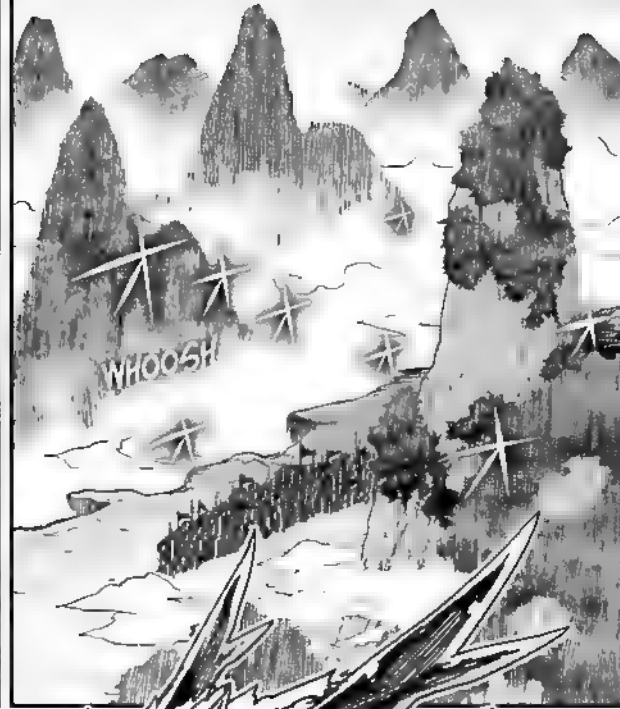
...WHAT
WILL BE
DIS-
CUSSED
AT THIS
KURULTAI.

RUMBLE

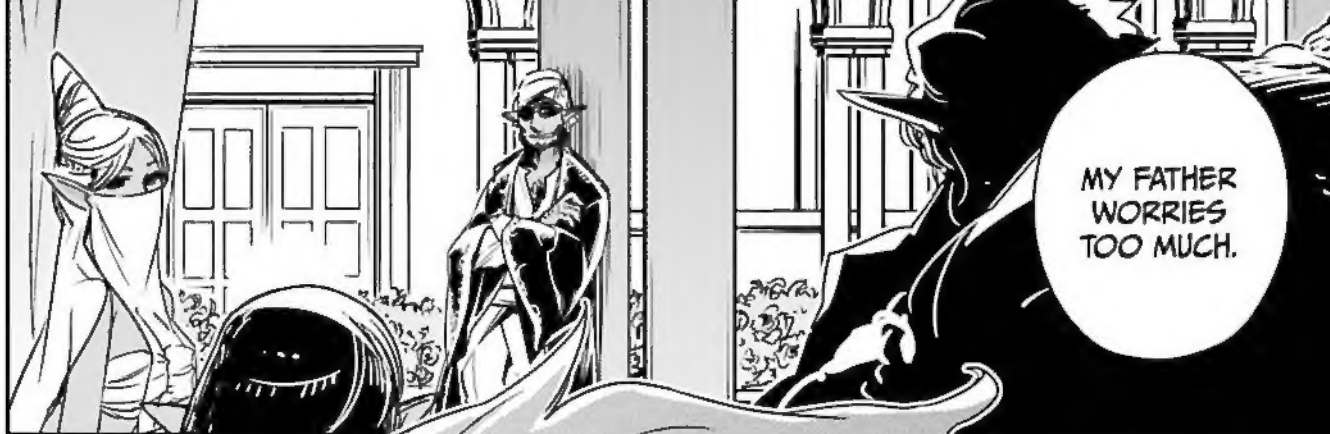


THE MECHANICAL
CLAN
THE STEEL
GENERAL









MY FATHER
WORRIES
TOO MUCH.



EVERY
DEMON
CLAN
KNOWS...

...WHAT
THIS
SEAL
MEANS.

HEALING HOT SPRINGS

Hot springs can be found all over Japan and often serve as public baths. Though their uses differ, they have been used all over the world since ancient times.

THE CONDITIONS FOR HOT SPRINGS ARE DETERMINED BY LAW

Citizens of Japan are very familiar with the hot springs that exist throughout their country. Though most people imagine hot springs as places where hot water flows out of the ground, there is actually a law known as the "Hot Spring Law."

The Hot Spring Law was created to preserve hot springs and prevent accidents from occurring due to the natural gases that are released when hot springs are excavated. Permission to excavate and use hot springs and labeling of its contents is determined by law, and only those that meet these conditions can be called hot springs. This law exists not only in Japan, but also in foreign countries such as Germany and Taiwan, which have their own sets of laws. However, in foreign countries drinking the water of hot springs for medicinal purposes is mainstream, and only a few regions bathe in hot springs to wash away one's fatigue. Abroad, hot springs for bathing are mostly used as heated pools at amusement facilities or for steam baths.

HOT SPRINGS HAVE BEEN POPULAR SINCE ANCIENT TIMES

Hot springs heated by the magma beneath volcanoes are known as "volcanic hot springs," and those that use other types of heat sources are known as "non-volcanic hot springs." In Japan where there are many volcanoes, the former are more common, and the 8th Century's Nihon-shoki has records of hot springs being used.

The medical effects of hot springs first began receiving attention during the Kamakura Era. At the time, they were only used by emperors and influential warriors, but with the construction of highways during the Tokugawa Era, ordinary people began using hot springs, too, and the modern style was established.



Though drinking in hot springs is common practice, one must be careful not to get too intoxicated due to improved circulation.



Though people tend to believe only the Japanese bathe naked, there are various nude baths throughout Europe.

Meanwhile, in Europe the Greeks were known for enjoying baths, and public baths were established inside cities of the Roman Empire. Later, the practice of bathing together died out due to infectious diseases and religion, and the practice of drinking hot spring water for its medicinal effects became established instead. Though bathing hot springs such as Belgium's famous Spa remain, it is only used for medical treatment.

In this manner, while different regions use hot springs in different ways, all across the world hot springs have been a part of human existence since ancient times.

MAOYU : Archenemy and Hero

“Become mine, Hero” “I refuse!”

Volume 7

KADOKAWA MANGA

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MAOYU MAOU YUUSHA

“KONO WARENO MONOTONARE, YUUSHAYO” “KOTOWARU!”

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